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WAR

JOHN LUTHER LONG

WAR

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Then he looked in her face, playing softer and softer

WAR

OR

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ONE LOVES ONE'S ENEMY

BY

JOHN LUTHER LONG

Author of

MADAME BUTTERFLY

THE FOX-WOMAN, ETC., ETC.

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INDIANAPOLIS

THE BOBBS-MERRILL COMPANY

PUBLISHERS

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PRESS OF
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BOOKBINDERS AND PRINTERS
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

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To him who loves the woman—
Who loves some one else.
And, to the woman!

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WAR

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I

WHEN DAVID AND JONATHAN FISHED

MY oldest boy's name was Jonathan, and the youngest David—though they weren't called that anywhere but in the family Bible—just Jon and Dave. Except when people got the Bible and the boys mixed up and called them David and Jonathan—sometimes David and Goliath!

Jon was the oldest and Dave the youngest and there was four years between. Jon didn't seem to care much for anybody else after Dave was born, and Dave never inquired if he had any parents—as long as Jon took charge of him. Well—I have to acknowledge that Jon made a better daddy to Dave than I did. Dave's

mother died when he was born and I took it hard. Didn't notice, like I ought, what was going on. But Jonathan took entire charge of Dave. He'd carry the little chap, before he yet could walk, a couple of miles on his back and fix him fast in the fork of a tree while he fished. And when they got home he'd swear that Dave had caught all the fish. And they'd all have to be cooked—minnies just an inch long, sometimes!—which always made a fuss between Jon and Betsy, the cook.

Yes, Jon was a good fisherman, and a good boss. He always got his way. But it was by gentleness. He used to preach to me, his own daddy, when he got older, about gentleness being stronger than anger, because, I suppose, I used to break glass when I got mad.

Only one ever got away with Jon's gentleness by kicking, and that was little Dave. Why, when he grew old enough to fish himself, he never caught a thing and he ruined Jon's reputation as a fisherman. He couldn't keep quiet a minute! He'd sing songs and

tumble summersets and scare the fish away and get tangled in the lines—sometimes come home crying with the hooks in him. Jon used to call him the King. But I called him Parliament. I expect he was both.

Always, on the farm, one went to college to learn and the rest stayed at home to work—if there was more than one son in the family, as there always was. So it was since seventeen hundred and ten—when we first got the farm—so it was with my brother Henry, Evelyn's stepfather and me, and so it had to be with my sons Jonathan and David. Germans like to obey the ways of their ancestors from generation to generation.

It was decided by lot, and begun way back when they used to leave everything to the Lord. Mostly, they'd put a hoe and a Bible on the floor and let us boy-babies crawl for 'em. If we took the hoe we were to be farmers. If we took the Bible we were to be students. The Bible was nice red morocco and gold, and the hoe was kept bright and shiny, and both had

come straight down from the ancestor who got the farm in seventeen-ten.

The first born had always the first choice, and so, when it was between my brother Henry and me, I crawled and took the hoe—which, I seem to remember, looked so nice and shiny. I'm fond of shiny things now, yet. Of course, Henry had to take the red Bible, there wasn't anything else. That's how it come that I stayed at home, which was literary, I expect, and Henry went to Virginia, to college, which never liked four walls about him. Anyhow, he learned nothing the first year except

"Ich liebe,
Du liebst,
Wir lieben—"

and the second year was married to Evelyn's mother already, a widow with a child! which he met when his class went on its annual tramp from Virginia to Tennessee. He never even came home—he was so in love with Evelyn's mother—but went and lived in Tennessee,

because she wanted him to, with niggers and a plantation, and spent more money breeding funny horses than my daddy and me could squeeze out of the old farm to keep him—including chickens, butter, eggs, and milk.

My Jon and his Uncle Henry were both born in the *Unter Gehenda,* that is the undergoing of the moon, which is a bad time to be born, and sad and gloomy and unlucky. But Dave and me was born in the *Über Gehenda,* the over-going of the moon, which is happy and joyous. So, you can see how the signs fool us sometimes.

When it came to deciding which was to go to college of *my* two boys, Jon, of course, being the oldest, crawled first and took the shiny hoe, like me, because it *was* shiny, I expect, and Dave was not only satisfied with the red Bible, but chewed the edges till he got colic. But the signs were no more right with Jon and Dave than they had been with Henry and me. Dave didn't care anything about college when he grew up, and Jon took all the learning he

could gether up—mostly by himself in fence corners—and wanted more.

Even when he minded the cows I used to see him sit under the trees and books come out of his pocket and his nose go into 'em forgetful.

That's how we came to lose Shalom—she was a cow. While Jon's nose was in a book Shalom's nose was fooling with a blast Swartz's men had set in the quarry, which went off before she stopped. Jon was sorry for Shalom and got the pieces and gave them decent burial and put up a wooden tombstone. She was the only cow living which ever came to misfortune through Jon. And it always worried him. He was crazy about *not* killing things. He used to say that only One could take life: Him that gave it. He wouldn't kill a fly. And that used to aggravate me. For they were mighty plenty on the old farm. Sometimes he'd catch a handful and put 'em out of doors—but the rest stayed with us—on account of Jonthy.

Of course, when he grew up more, he minded his farming business more. But it wasn't as easy as sleeping in church. He had to keep a memorandum-book with the hour for each part of the day's work. Though he had a good eye and a good hand when he got at it! No one in the township could drive a straighter furrow! And he could cradle a ten-acre field of wheat without dropping a dozen heads—and so the stubbles looked like yellow plush afterward—so nice and even! He never neglected anything—after the death of Shalom—by the help of the memorandum-book.

To think about Dave having a memorandum-book, or bothering with "duty" makes me laugh now!

Maybe his chewing that red Bible had something to do with it. For he always liked red things—color—warmth—snap. It was all joy with Dave. Fishing—swimming—fighting black-head bumble-bees—making uncomfortable "harness" for the dog Wasser—and so on. Why, he drove the poor old dog away

from home, pestering him with his wagons and harnesses. Jon was scared stiff. He thought now Dave had a death on his conscience, like *he* had, about Shalom. He had an idea that no one could live without Dave, and that, therefore, Wasser had committed suicide —maybe, by drowning. He looks all over for the dog for three days, and Dave doesn't bother his head about him.

Then, when Jon was half crazy, Dave goes off and finds Wasser in five minutes—hiding in the haymow where he could see Dave without danger. I don't know how Dave knew it, or Wasser got there, but he went straight to the spot.

Then he brings Wasser home on his shoulder, both as pleased as a bride and groom, and licking each other!

And, that's Dave for you! Never bothering till some one was about crazy, and then bothering a lot—and fixing things all in a minute. Honest, he fooled the bumble-bees that way. They stopped coming on the farm—

Dave worried 'em so—and that's bad luck for a farm—till Dave stole some wild honey one night, in the dark of the moon, and built a nest for them in the clover. Then they came back and Dave forgot it.

Till one stung him one day—one that remembered him, I expect—and he caught him and took his stinger away and put him back in the nest. That bee must have told the others. For none of them ever bothered any of us after that, and they and Dave were like brothers. And old Wasser, after that love feast, he used to get in Dave's way just to get pushed out.

People called him a shustle—yet they always had to laugh when they said it, because Dave had a kind of way that made them like him—and Germans think they have no business to like shustles! Everything was fun—yes. But everybody likes fun. And it was mighty nice on the old farm to have little Dave always so gay and happy. And he wasn't selfish about it—not a bit of it! He'd give up about any kind of fun to be with Jon—running and tum-

bling after him in the furrow behind the plow. Never working, of course. No one expected that of Dave. He was to go to college.

Maybe you think that Jon crammed his head so full of knowledge just to have it on hand! Not at all. It was just to get Dave ready for college. Well, Dave passed all his entering examinations like a breeze. Nobody on earth but Jon would have been able to get enough into Dave to pass 'em.

II

WHAT THE TENTH SHELL AT SUMTER CAUSED

HENRY, my brother, was one of the men who was helping to worry Major Anderson and starve him out of Fort Sumter in 1861. He was a regular Southerner by that time. And when they found that Anderson wouldn't go, poor Henry was one of them that built the batteries on Sullivan's Island. I know just how that sort of work suited him! I bet he was always right out front. But after the tenth shell from Sumter, they sent Henry to his home in a pine box, and when it came there was no one to receive it but the girl Evelyn. Her mother had dropped dead with the despatch! She loved our Henry so much! Evelyn telegraphs the news of the death with her last money and that she has no parents nor money nor home now and what shall she do. I

answers right away that I'm coming to get her, because she's ours now. But at Memphis they turned me back unless I'd take the oath of allegiance to a lot of foolish things, and if I waited long they'd, maybe, put me in jail, for safe-keeping, or improve my appearance with chicken feathers. Well, I helped to tar and feather a fellow once—Elick Schnatz. He didn't make much trouble, only asked several times to be excused. He was such a perfect gentleman about it that I tried to get him excused. But the boys said he was worthless—and they hadn't had any fun for some time. However, they said, on account of me, they wouldn't put any tar in his hair. And Schnatz he thanked *me* for that.

"Because," he says, "I don't know as there's any kind of soap'll take tar out of hair without taking the hair out—and I'm fond of my hair. If you are ever tar-and-feathered, Vonner, I'll try and get your hair excused for you, anyhow," says he.

But Schnatz wasn't in Memphis at that

time, and, anyhow, I don't think he could have even got my hair excused from the fellows I saw there. They hadn't had any fun, either, to judge from the way they enjoyed the war, for a long time, and they were bound to get all they could out of this one. They didn't like me calling it "var," and tried to make me say "wah", and I didn't like their calling it "wah," and wouldn't say it. I didn't make friends by that, and so I got my notice one night to let the committee know who and what I was and what my business was by the next morning. Well, the walking was fair, and the night was dark. I didn't know the way, but I could see the north star.

I didn't wait. But I sent Jim Rasly, a nigger, who was as Union as I, but who had the right words and the right color and was able to say "wah" easy, and he brought Evelyn to the old place. My, but I was surprised to find that she wasn't a baby, but a tall young lady of seventeen, and looking more! You see, I'd forgot about time running one way while I was

running the other! We gave her Dave's room because Dave had no use for it. He was at college in Virginia, where the red Bible had sent him.

Well, Evelyn gave us a good many scprizes, at least one a day—while they lasted. But, the first and, maybe, the biggest was her affection for our Henry—being only her stepdaddy. But, she'd never been acquainted with her real father, because he died before she was born, and she was always crazy, from a baby up, for a daddy "like other little girls." So, when Henry came along and said he'd be her daddy —well, though she was a pretty big girl by that time she was just as crazy for one—maybe more so—and you can believe that Henry didn't disappoint her! I expect they was a good bit like her and Dave. Just the best friends. Anyhow, we soon found out she's crazy about Henry, as a father, and mighty mad at the Unions for killing him. She used to get so worked up when she'd talk about it, that we kept on reminding her that he wasn't

her real father, only her stepfather, until she turns the vials of her wrath on us all one day and asks us if she's the only one in this house who loves him! Of course we both answers that we adores him as much as she does. But she snaps out that we don't act like it and goes off to bed—coming to breakfast the next morning with red eyes, kissing us, and asking us to forgive her, and saying that, of course, we loved Henry as much as she did—more! For, no one could know him as long as we had known him without being willing to die for him! And to forgive her if we can.

Jon and I looks sheepish at each other, for, though we did love Henry all we could, which was a good deal, we had never thought about dying for him.

After breakfast Jon says:

"Remember she's from the South, daddy, and loves and hates harder than we do."

III

WHAT WAS GOING ON IN VIRGINIA

WELL, it had been unsettled on the border, even before the election of Lincoln, and six months after Dave went away to college in Virginia, the war trouble broke out in earnest. It was about even down our way, till after the battle of Bull Run. Then there were many more secessionists than Unions. There were three fights inside of three weeks at the store, and in every one the Unions got licked. I was in the first one. That's the reason I wasn't in the other two.

Dave used to write funny letters from college, about rebels and Unions and we'd all laugh at 'em. But a little after Bull Run he wrote one which worried me some. He said that his class—all but him—had voted to go into the army of Virginia, but that he'd told

'em he'd have to write home to find out whether he was Union or Democrat. They didn't like that. He hoped we were Democrats so that he could go with the boys and have a good time licking the Black Republicans. It was all he could do, he said, to stay behind when the boys in the slickest uniforms he had ever seen, mostly made by their sweethearts, and with twenty or thirty gold-and-blue officers to each regiment, had gone and taken Harper's Ferry and the navy yard at Gosport—with no deaths. Every one was a separate hero, and all the sweethearts left behind (a good many went along) took the first train to Harper's Ferry to tell them so. Couldn't he go along when they took Washington?—which would be next. Maybe he could find a sweetheart. And, when they had Philadelphia and New York, he'd stop to see how we were getting along before taking the oath of office as President of the Confederate States of America—formerly the United States of Ditto—just in fun, of course, as you can see.

But I got Evelyn, who was a better scholar than I, to write back that we were all Union to the backbone and that we were nailing Maryland down so that she couldn't get out of the Union, and not to bother about wars nor rumors of war, but study hard, as he was too young, anyhow, to fight with anybody but me and I could lick him any day—also in fun.

Evelyn was kind of shy and distressed, and finally said:

"Daddy, dear, you oughtn't to ask *me* to write that."

"Why?" says I.

"Because I ain't Union to the backbone," says she.

"To be sure!" says I. "Not quite through. I forgot. You are most two yards of rebel up and down. They're the most dangerous—the lady rebels. I expect you'd like to be making funny flags and sticking them up on female colleges like they're doing in Dixie. The women's terrible fighters!"

I laughed, but Evelyn cried. It was hard for

her to see a joke. Women ain't funny, mostly.

"Yes," she says, dropping tears on the letter, "just a girl rebel. And yes, they *are* terrible, thank God. And I shan't forget who murdered my father! A woman's vengeance is not like a man's. It never sleeps or dies. And the slayer of my father shall suffer—or his brethren shall—for him!"

Well! I never saw Evelyn like that! I didn't think she had it in her! Just a nice young girl—till I stirred her up. And remember, Henry really wasn't her father, though, remember again, she'd never known any other father. Of course, as I have told you, I don't wonder that she loved our Henry a lot. Everybody did that got near him. Dave—happy little Dave, always reminded me of him. She scribbled fiercely at the letter, dropping more tears, and I sneaked away—for, as I told you, I am no kind of a father.

I could see next day that she was scared about it—and so I scolded her a little. I was never afraid to scold her—when she was scared.

IV

IN LINCOLN'S PEN

AND about this time those mysterious doings began which, I suppose, always happen on the border between two nations at war. I can't tell, now, just what they were at first, but it made you creepy—and look suddenly behind you. Strange people came to the house, now and then, and asked strange questions. Queer teams passed along, with queer loads—often covered over with other things. Something got into the air which kept us nervous. I would come across a neighbor who had been peaceful and friendly the day before, to find him fighty and an enemy, ready to slam me in the face, and more ready to call me all sorts of hard names, and blaming me for the whole war.

In church, which was called "The Ark of Peace," it got so bad that the seats on the

south side of the aisle was called "Africa" by the Unions, and the north side was called "Lincoln's Pen," by the secessionists. And the members moved from one side to the other, according to their war-politics.

The aisle was called "Kentucky" because it was supposed to be neutral territory. But no secessionist would move an inch to let a Union pass to "Lincoln's Pen" through "Kentucky". For, at that time, after the fourth fight at the store, the secessionists had far the best of it, and, according to my own count, there were three hundred and ten in "Africa," while "Lincoln's Pen" had only a hundred and forty-six. But that aisle made all take sides. There were no neutrals. There was nothing to sit on in "Kentucky."

Of course, Parr Horwitz had a hard time of it, preaching straight down that aisle, about angels and archangels all the time, avoiding everything fighty, till Herman Vare rose up in his pew in "Africa" one Sunday and said:

"Pastor, the Bible is full of war-stories.

David and Goliath, the Battle of Jericho, the slaughter of the Amalekites, the crossing of the Red Sea, the battle of Armageddon—all of these typifying the present struggle of the South for liberty. We are two to one and we demand that you preach of wars and rumors of wars, two sermons out of three, or else—"

Well, "or else" meant that the pastor wouldn't get his salary the next month if he didn't—and, maybe, be wearing feathers instead of clothes—and he began, by preaching a hummer—calling upon the secessionists to blow their trumpets and throw down the abolition walls of Washington!

He got a cheer from "Africa"—the first cheers, I suppose, that old church ever heard—and afterward it was worse than ever—until "Africa" outnumbered "Lincoln's Pen" four to one, and the pastor kept on thundering war-sermons, never one about peace and doves, and not down the aisle, in "Kentucky"—where no one was—but straight into "Africa", with his back turned on "Lincoln's Pen".

I tell you it took courage to go to church, them days, and keep from fighting, and soon I excused myself—and so did most all of the other Unions. Four to one was no use.

After that they had it all their own way in "Africa"—and they didn't seem to like it. They were fighty, even in church, wanted to drive us to "Lincoln's Pen" to be bombarded. It wasn't much fun fighting battles without an enemy. They were too sure to win.

At last, when they hadn't us any more to fight, they got to fighting among themselves. Some was too secession and others wasn't secession enough. Some was ready to go into the Confederate army, and others said that was going too far. They got called cowards—spies—Abolitionists—and Know-Nothings—and they called the others Copperheads—Knights-of-the-Golden-Circle—and Nigger-lovers—and those were all fight-words to every man in those days. Well, the upshot of it was that they had a battle, right there in the church, and tore the place to pieces, with many wounded

and no dead. Parr Horwitz was so scared that he skedaddled, and was never heard from again, and some one nailed up what was left of the church, and it wasn't opened again for five years. But that fight in the church made worse blood than anything else—like church fights always do. After that everybody was mad at everybody else, and called each other all kinds of hard names. And the secret organizations, for one disloyal purpose or another, flourished mightily—just for spite.

It never looked exactly like an Ark of Peace from that time on—the nice old church.

V

ABOUT THE LOVE GAME

THEN Dave wrote, again, that he *must* join the army down there—or come home—or at least get out of Virginia. They were lynching Union men whenever they were not otherwise busy, which, thank heaven, was not often. All that saved him was that they didn't know whether he was Union or rebel—he didn't himself. He wanted to know that—strictly confidential. If he was Union, he'd skedaddle. If he wasn't, he'd join something down there. There was no school no more, anyhow. The president of the college was a colonel in the Fairfax Cavalry, and the chaplain was an independent guerrilla captain. He ended by asking who wrote our letter at the beginning and who else at the end, and who slopped water on it, and why did it smell like the flowers in the three-cornered pasture.

When I read that last I saw Evelyn catch her breath, and I asked her, very kind this time, to write back a large no. That his place was taken and his room was filled—with that perfume that he liked. There wasn't a hole or corner for him, except, maybe, the haymow, with Wasser, and so, he got to stay down there, and learn!—and let 'em guess whether he was Union or rebel.

Evelyn didn't want to write that, either, remembering my scolding, maybe, but cried a little again, though meek and humble now. Nothing about the murderer of her father; and she kissed me.

"Daddy, I'll go away and make room for Dave," she said. "I ought to, I *am* a rebel. I can't help it."

But I kissed her and said that we liked her as much as Dave, and that she couldn't go. That we loved her—loved her just for herself—which was good enough excuse for any one!—and not because we wanted to keep Dave down among the Johnny Rebs. He went there to

learn and he must. And she might be as much of a rebel as she liked. There was plenty of 'em about, and nobody was getting hurt yet—much.

It was really so, that we loved her—and most as much as Dave. Personally, I don't remember ever seeing a prettier girl than Evelyn. I don't think any one around here ever did. Our girls are different: mostly fat and with taffy hair and blue eyes. But Evelyn had eyes like the shady twin-springs in the Poison Woods—where you can see mysterious things you don't understand—and big and round—a good deal like a little cow-calf. *Unshuldich,* the Germans call 'em. And her hair was black—actually black—with no shine to it—and never would lay straight, just clung close about her face, careless, like pictures I've seen, but never on a real person. And her face it was kind of pale and glorious and high born, with red spots in the cheeks which spread all over her face, and sometimes her neck and breast, when she was surprised or happy. And it was seri-

ous, mostly, like she didn't understand a joke. But when she did smile and open her red lips on her white teeth—well, that was about the sweetest soprize I've ever seen—like the clouds had parted and the sun was shining through.

Her sadness, of course, was mostly about her mother and her father—as she always called Henry. She had an idea that the Unions at Sumter had deliberately murdered him, and when she thought of that, all the loveliness seemed to go out of her, and she became hard and could do unkind things. I always knew when she was thinking of this, by the way her eyes glittered, and then there was no red in her cheeks. When she began to think of her father's murder, as she called it, I always got out of the way. I don't like trouble. I'm always for peace. Anyhow, if she was left alone, she always repented and was extra nice to us.

But, mostly, she was kind and gentle, and—like her mother, she said. Tall and easy of motion. She had a picture of her mother and

they was just about the same at her age, so I didn't blame Henry so much, no more, for his:

"Ich liebe,
Du liebst,
Wir lieben—"

and so on. I was old enough to have sense, but I use' to think that such a woman as Evelyn's mother looked like could have made me do something foolish—maybe.

Well, she soon had us that we'd have fallen down and worshiped her, I expect—when she was gentle—even the cattle in the barnyard. But Jon was the worst of all. Right from the start he was witchcrafted, hands and feet, like a nigger slave. I never saw anything so quick. Both of them were rather solemn and didn't talk much. But, Jon's blue eyes weren't so slow saying things to her dark ones, and his voice, when he read German to her, out of books, wasn't far behind hers. And when he sung to her, with the guitar, German songs, like *Blau ist ein Blümelein,* I just didn't

know my son no more! It was a kind of language without words.

Jon, he was entirely different from the rest of the *freundschaft,* anyhow. I never could understand him myself—which was his daddy. Now, you could read Dave like a book, through and through. It was wonderful, the difference between those two brothers.

And, handsome—Jon! With long careless yellow hair that he use' to shake out of his eyes, and a couple, or so, of little whiskers hiding out on his face.

The first I knew what was actually up, was one day Evelyn brought the dinner to the field. We were reaping with sickles in the New-Bought-Field, me and Jon and the hireland, because the rye was too much lodged to take the machine in. Yet the rye was good, and we needed it for roasting to make coffee. Real coffee had gone up to a dollar a pound.

I didn't know Evelyn was about at all till Jon dropped his sickle and run 'way 'cross the

field and got her off the fence where she was sticking fast, with the jug and the basket to manage, and scared of a couple of harmless cows a-watching what she was going to do about it.

Jonathan carried the jug and the basket to the old shellbark tree and looked like he was crazy to carry her, too. She had no umbrell' and he held his big straw hat over her head to keep the sun off. She looked like a glowing red flower. But I expect old Jonthy had no idea how fine *he* looked in his shining bare head, with the sun on it.

"Now, that's strange!" thinks I, to myself, "that Jon should notice once that a woman had a fence to climb. He used to laugh at them when cows got after them. And it has to be mighty funny when Jon laughs."

"Jonthy," says I, "how did you know? Was you expecting her?"

"I must have been, daddy," laughs Jonathan back at me.

"Was *you* expecting him—to rescue you from the fearful cows?" I also asked of Evelyn.

"I must have been, daddy," says she, exactly like Jon, and smiles that smile I have been telling you about—white teeth, red lips and love by the bushel!

"And neither didn't know the other was coming?"

They both said no.

"One of those—"

"Coincidences," says they both at once.

Evelyn was leaning up against the old shellbark tree and swinging Betsy's Sunday sunbonnet, which she'd borrowed of the cook, by the strings, right into Jon's face, and both was laughing. Now, what do you think of that for two such solemns! But it looked nice—very nice. Behind Evelyn was the big black tree, and behind that, yet, the yellow wheat pitching about, under the wind, like the waves of the ocean—at least I expect so, though I have never seen the ocean—and I don't sup-

pose it's yellow—and for a background, the blue old sky with little sugar-loaf clouds like they might fall on us. It looked like that picture in the old red Bible, of Ruth reaping—if Evelyn had just had a sickle yet, and shorter clothes. But handsomer than Ruth, enough sight. One of Ruth's eyes wasn't printed right. And, anyhow, Evelyn's eyes couldn't be printed.

Old Jon, with his smile and yellow hair and whiskers just fitting into the color plan of the wheat, wasn't so very far out of the picture, neither. And, I expect, if some one else was telling this he might say that me and the hireland was somewhere near the frame.

"Daddy," says Evelyn, "if I can get work here—I'll work!"

Just in fun. She couldn't work. Such hands as she had on the ends of her arms are for ornament, not work.

"Yes," says I, "you can. We're just one hand short. You can take Dave's place. Get his old rusty sickle and sharpen it up, and we'll

throw him out of the family in exchange for you and let him join the rebels if he's so crazy to. To all intents and purposes, as aforesaid, as Squire Schwartz says, you are my son Dave, and my son Dave is disowned—" just in fun, as you can see. Dave never worked.

We all laughed a little, not hard, and Jon, he says, with a look at Evelyn:

"She can easy take Dave's sickle. He was never much of a hand with the sickle—but—"

"But not his place in your hearts!" breaks in Evelyn, turning rebel, "I've never crossed the door-sill of your affections. I'm an outsider. A poor relation! I'd be a servant—save that I don't work. I wish there were a place where I could earn my living. But I haven't been taught anything. How can I? Some day I'll offend you by my rebel sentiments and you'll turn me out. And if no one else does it, Dave will do it when he comes! I haven't been afraid of you and Jon, but I am afraid of him! The immaculate and wonderful Dave! Hah! And to think that I have his room!

Sleep in his bed! My enemy! I hate him! Yes, before I have ever seen him I hate him! But I'll be as much of a rebel as I like though I die for it."

She pounded her breast till I was afraid she'd hurt herself, and I went and held her hands.

"Kushy! kushy!" says I, *"be* a rebel as much as you like. It's a free country. It won't make no other rebels around here; they're all made already; or set the Swamp Creek afire—it won't burn. But don't you hate Dave. That's a fight word. And you'll have old Wasser eating you up, the bees stinging you and the fish biting you if you do. Besides, what's the use in saying it? You can't. No one ever could. Dave was made to be loved and every one obeys nature and does it. Join in."

While I was speaking Jon came up and took one of her hands—in fact the whole arm, and says:

"Little sister, daddy is right. No one on earth ever hated Dave, or could hate him. Nor

was anything on earth ever even afraid of him. Even the stinging bees on the farm love him. You will, too, the moment you see him. I prophesy that. You've taken nothing of little Dave's but what he'd give you—a hundredfold! If any one asked for his head—"

"Dave would cut it off and hand it over with a polite bow!" says I—just in fun, as you can see.

"Is he little, Jonthy?" asks Evelyn, suddenly forgetting to be a rebel and all about the hate and fear. "If he's small enough for me to take on my lap—"

I nearly exploded. And even Jon had to stuff his fist in his mouth.

"I'm afraid," says Jon, "you couldn't take him on your lap, handy. We used to call him little when he was a baby, and it's sort of stuck to him—I don't know why. He's about as big as I am, by now, I expect."

"Oh!" says Evelyn.

"Do you think you could take old Jonthy on your lap, handy?" says I—in fun, of course.

"Daddy!" says Jon.

"Excuse me!" says I. "I meant in several pieces."

"In one way I'm glad about that," says Evelyn. "I don't like little people. Maybe, if Dave's as tall and handsome as you, Jon, I won't exactly hate him. I may like him a little."

"The easiest job you ever undertook!" says Jon, blushing a little about that "handsome" business.

"No, it will not be easy," insists Evelyn. "It will take all my power of will. And who will explain me? He doesn't seem ever to have heard of me."

"You will explain yourself—just a look at you!" says Jon. "But, I will tell Dave a few things. Dave and me are very good friends."

"He can't be as dear and sweet as you, Jonthy!" she says, leaning up against old Jonathan.

And Jon, when she done that, the holiness came into his face. I might as well have been

a thousand miles away. Jon was in a country where I couldn't follow.

But I don't let no one lose me that way. So I broke in:

"How did you get here, anyhow, Evelyn,—without being injured? You are afraid of cows, and you can't climb no fences. And the fields are full of man-eating rabbits! How did you get here whole?"

"With these," she answers, holding on to Jon more yet, and sticking out a foot that wasn't made for stubbles. "And I am not afraid of anything, and I can climb fences, when my good knight is near."

Meaning Jon!

"U-hu!" say I, "he looks like good morning, by the smile, ever since you came!"

"Then I'll bring the dinner every day! It's good to smile!"

"Then Jon will have a chronic open face before the summer is over," says I—just in fun —"and be no use with tools!"

She was different, that day, and better than

I'd ever seen her. Bitter and sweet. Gentle and savage. Now she was glowing. A little while ago she was a thunder-storm. I don't know why men like that kind of women. Jon had no learning about them. But he fell the same as they who had. Like brother Henry —me, if I'd had the chance.

Apple-jack always makes me sleepy. So the hireland and me laid down behind the shell-bark tree to take a nap. Jon he laid down on the grass at Evelyn's feet and read poetry to her out of a German book he had in his pocket.

It was about an old man in Germany who sold his soul to the Old Boy so's he could be made young and love a girl he knew. They talked a good deal about it—Evelyn contending there were no such men nowadays, old Goliath, as we sometimes called Jonthy, telling her that the world was just full of 'em. I expect Jonthy was trifling with the truth a little about that. Anyhow, I never heard about any of 'em being willing to give up their souls for a little while with a woman. Most of 'em won't

even give up smoking and drinking for 'em. An' the way they bother 'em after they get 'em makes me think that Jon either didn't know all the news or was fooling Evelyn a little.

Jonathan just let himself go deeper and deeper—didn't try to beat the love game. Evelyn didn't seem to notice it, and Jon had no idea that it mightn't be all right with her. My, how it changed him! But, love does that to a fellow. It done it to me once. That's how I learned to wear a stovepipe hat! Jon, he wore paper collars on Sundays, and put smelly things on his hair, which Evelyn made him quit, and went to town once and got a shave. Evelyn was also disappointed in the shave. So Jon blushed and says he'll never do it again—and he didn't.

"Fortunately, you didn't get your hair cut," says Evelyn. "All it needs, now and then, is a little trimming. And I'll do that—if you'll let me. I use' to do it for father."

Well, once a day wouldn't have been too often for Jonthy to have Evelyn get the scis-

sors and her fingers in his hair, after she begun it! But she wouldn't do it more'n once a month —on the first—which she said was too often, but, on account of being forced, she would do it that much. Jon never let the day pass by! He'd bring her the scissors, the comb and a towel for her to pin around him—My, my! When she'd pin that towel her arms had to go round him! She was standing behind. Once he kissed her both hands when they was under his chin. Evelyn laughed. But Jon was white as the towel. Then he got red. He stayed that color.

Those hair-cuts! Jon's head looked like the places where Shalom used to eat grass, in the meadows. Shalom was a lazy and luxurious sort of a cow, so she'd eat in the shade of a tree—sometimes laying down. And, some places, where the grass was extra sweet, she'd eat till the ground stuck out. Others, where timothy grew instead of clover, she'd let alone, or just eat off the heads of the timothy. You know how stubbly that looks! Then she'd lay

down on it all and go to sleep. Well—that's Jon's head. Real cow-licks!

But Jon wouldn't have had it different no sooner than old Shalom. I think he loved the spots best where Evelyn absent-mindedly cut down to the skin. And if she happened to take a piece of that—all the better for Jon, somehow. It's a wonderful game—love!

VI

UNDER THE PLUM TREES

IT'S no use. I can't tell it. Old Jon was almost as gay and joyous as Dave, after a while—that's how glorious old Jonthy got to be with Evelyn about.

I use' to go out under the plum trees at night, sometimes, to reflect about my wife who was dead. And, one night, when I was laying on the flat of my back on that old yellow bench, looking at the moon through the trees—I can reflect much better that way—Jonathan and Evelyn came out and sat on the red bench. Evelyn folded her hands—this way—and looked up, through the trees, at the big yellow moon, as if she had some one dead to think of, also, and nothing much to say. Jonathan begun to tune his guitar. He was a nice player, and he kept picking soft little chords for a while, just rambling round among the notes

to find something nice enough for Evelyn. He found it, all right, after a while, and begun to sing. It was:

"Du hast das Herze mein,
So ganz genommen ein,
Dass ich kein' Andre lieb',
Als dich allein—"

Well, it was like praying. And he was looking up in Evelyn's face with an expression in his own that I had never seen there yet. But Evelyn didn't seem to notice—just kept looking up at the moon, in the *Mond-licht,* and went on reflecting. Me? I was getting hot at her myself—a not listening when old Jonthy sang to her like that! I'd have broke out in a minute more—if Jon hadn't begun to inch along the bench till he got near her—then almost against her. Then he looked in her face, playing softer and softer. I could hardly stand it. But she never noticed. Then Jon took her hand—kissed it—smiled up at her like an angel. Jon, he must have learned that out of books—it was so fine and manly. I know

he didn't learn it of me. She notices then, all right, and looks down, as if it was the first time she ever knew that she and Jon lived in the same world. She actually didn't know what had happened. But she kept getting her thoughts together, and Jon kept the hand—and kissed it some more. Then she begun to wake up. She looked at Jon several times, then down at the hand he had, several times more, then she says, soft and surprised, passing the other hand over her eyes:

"Why, Jon!"

"Let me kiss your soul!" says Jon.

"And—and, I never saw you look at me quite like that!"

"Let me look at your heart!" begs Jon.

"But what does it mean, Jon?"

"Love!" says Jon. "Holy adoration! The greatest love any man in all the world ever had for any woman!"

And he looked up at her, in the light of the moon, in the most beautiful and beseeching way I ever saw.

"Love?" asks Evelyn, still not quite awake, and passing her hand over her face.

"Du hast das Herze mein,
So ganz genommen ein—"

Jon sang.

Then at last she woke up entirely and looked at Jon in a strange and terrible kind of way. She took her hand away and moved off.

"Jon," she says, "you're my brother."

"I'm your slave!" says Jon.

"Give your love to some one—worthier of it!"

"There is none such!"

"As for me—I am a monster! If you knew what makes me say that you would agree in it. You must not love me. If you knew my thoughts you could not."

"Monster!" says old Jon, "you're an angel, straight from heaven!"

Now what do you think of that for a son of mine!

Evelyn just looked as if she couldn't understand his language.

"You came like a burst of divine flame to kindle a holy passion," Jon goes on. "The Lord sent you to complete my imperfect life. Before you came there was only little Dave. But he had to go away. I seem to understand that with your coming I am myself again and that you are to be me, I you—one perfect exquisite being!—and that you are never to go again."

"Jon," says Evelyn, turning soft and pitiful, "you must try and be merciful—to us both."

"Mercy is for you, dear," says Jon.

"No, no, brother Jonthy," says Evelyn, even more pitiful. "I want just enough of your great love for a sister. That is all I dare receive. That is all you may give. Keep the rest for some one more worthy. Now, let us not hurt each other. I am capable of it! Maybe I have done it—hurt you all. But what matters it that a few of us fall by the wayside if the people are saved! Jon, there must be no more of this. I have dedicated myself to a great cause. I am not I any more. I am a

thing—a machine to do the will of a cause. One small link in the great chain which leads from here to there!"

She points south. Then she says, like a general giving a command:

"There must be no more of this. I am not love. I am war! I am a great cause!"

Well, of course, Jon didn't understand that crazy stuff any more than I did. He goes straight back to the love.

"Evelyn," says Jon, desperate, "it *must* be more! You must marry me."

Then, even in the night, I could see the hardness come into her face, and when she spoke it cut through her voice like iron.

"Would you like to know what my heart is full of at this moment?" she says.

"Yes," says Jon, thinking maybe, that it was something about him.

"Murder!" says Evelyn.

"No, no," says Jonathan, "not in that heart. It is made to be filled with love. Nothing else."

She laughed in that way that always made me shiver.

"You don't seem to be aware that we are enemies, and become more so every day—with every shot fired down there in Virginia. I tell you that every one of those bullets goes through my heart—here! I tell you that I hate you all—all who call yourselves Union. And you know that you all hate me,—that your little affection for me is what you would give to any mendicant who came to your door. Oh, you are good in that way! You don't turn beggars out. But you are not good enough to be *rebels!*—as you fools call us. You don't stop to think that your father's brother had the courage to be one! And you don't recall that some of you murdered him! At night, while he stood faithfully at his gun! And his blood is on you—his own kin—as well as the rest. Shall I tell you some more of the things in my heart? Oh, there won't be any talk of love between us after this—will there? Nor

between me and any one who calls himself a follower of Lincoln. But I don't mind telling you that I am living, breathing, hoping only for the South—and that I am going to do all I can to help her! All, all! She shall prevail! She shall conquer! For, there are a million like me at work for her! Do you think the North can defeat such a host as that? A million like me!"

"No," says Jon, fascinated like a bird by a snake, "no, not one like you! You are glorious! You are invincible—you alone! And your cause must be—to raise such a spirit in even one such woman! Though I've thought little enough about either side—to my shame. But, love—"

"You mean—you mean," whispers she, stooping and almost putting her arms around Jon, "that you might be—can be—*are* one of *us?* Speak!"

But poor old Jon was troubled at that. Think of the temptation! He took her hands to keep her near, but he said:

"I do not know—I do not know! I have thought little about the war—about anything but you—since you came! I don't know!"

This did not please Evelyn. She flung his hands away.

"You, a man, and don't know! Oh, if the women could but fight this war! You, a man, with hell seething all about you and talking, thinking of love! A woman! A woman's man! There is no room in my heart for love, or such a man! I don't even hear you. Shall I tell you the plan I was making when you began to talk of love? I was planning to find, here, in the North, a soldier—many—to take the place of my father. That would be just. That would be only fair vengeance. I thought of you for my soldier!"

I imagined for the next few minutes the girl had gone crazy. And Jon must have thought so, too. For he kept stroking a hand which she didn't know he had and murmuring:

"You! You thought of me. You thought that! You!"

"Me! Now do you want to talk a little more of love—my kind of love? Or do you prefer—war! Never speak of love to me again till you are one of my kind."

She got so jerky and crazy that Jon was scared.

"Kushy, kushy!" he kept saying.

"I'll make a bargain with you," she laughs to Jon, crazy, and stooping and looking like a young devil in his face, "I don't love you; I can't lie. But I *do* want you! I can't love any one or anything called Union, Republican or Northern. But I'll marry you if you'll take the place of my father. Do you understand? I can put you right through the lines to Lee without risk. What do you say? Here's the price of one traitor! I! I'll be your wife—your harlot—anything—upon the terms proposed!"

She stood up straight and evil-looking—like pictures of serpents I've seen, charming animals. Then she laughs and is gone.

And Jon was struck so dumb that he didn't

move a finger—not even looking around when she disappeared like a snake sliding through the grass.

For a long time nothing moved. Then the guitar fell, pang-tang! and Jon said something that got mixed up with the music.

I got up, quiet, and went over and sat down aside of Jonthy. He just looked up, surprised to see me there, but said nothing. I was sorry for him. At last I pulls him up and leads him off to bed.

"Boy," says I, nice and kind, when we got to his room, "no woman is worth dishonor. No one woman can be won—or if won, kept—by dishonor—not even that she goes after herself. Your daddy and Dave are Union—to the backbone. Your mother was—that's dead. This old house is—to the chimley tops. There never was any such doings under its roof. General George Washington slept under it. Jonthy, what are you?"

He just looked at me, crazy, like he'd never seen me before.

"Think about it, Jon," says I. "It's time. Good night."

Well—you know what a difference there is in the morning. For myself, I wondered whether all of it had happened. I had to begin my breakfast alone. But when Jon and Evelyn came I was sure that everything had taken place. Evelyn was sorry and weepy, and shy of Jon at first. But he went over to her just as of old, when she came down, and kissed her good morning, on her forehead, and then she laid her head against him and cried. As for Jon—he looked like he'd had a spell of sickness.

"I can't help it," she sobs, "It's in here, boiling up all the time. I try to beat it—I do, indeed, but all of a sudden it comes out without me saying yes or no. I can't—I can't! If you love me, please try and bear with that. Forgive me, Jon, forgive me, daddy! Always forgive me! You must. It's an infirmity, illness. Dearest Jon and dearest daddy in the world! And put your arms about me—both of you—

yes, about an irreconcilable rebel!—two Black Republicans—and let us have peace. I'll try not to let it happen again."

Just think of a woman who could do all that and smile and cry all together, like an angel! Wasn't she wonderful? And that's the kind of women men go crazy about! But don't you forget that's the kind of women go crazy 'bout men—when the right one comes!

She pulls one on each side of her, so's we're all hugged and mixed up together, and all laughing and crying says:

"Oh, daddy, dear, and Jonthy, darling, together, tighter! If you'd only always do that when I am that way—put your arms about me—the more harder the better—and just hold me till the devil goes out of me! Kill me this way if you must!"

"There's no need," says I, thinking it all over—after what I knew about women!

None of us said any more about it, though we all watched our words for some time, and, at last, it wore off and was forgotten.

Jon says to me one day later, still kind of dazed:

"It didn't mean a thing, did it daddy?"

"Not a thing!" says I.

"Do you think it'll happen again?"

"Often," says I, "and won't mean no more. Look out for it. And remember—nothing from nothing is nothing. You know what you said yourself, Jonthy. Southern women love and hate harder than we do—when they're thinking of it. When they're not they don't love or hate at all—just like we do."

VII

WHO WAS LUCAS MALLORY?

WELL, war makes funny things to happen. Ben Crider's tavern is straight down the valley, southward, from here. And though the Criders had lived there about as long as we had lived here, I had never seen their house from here, even in winter-time, owing to the trees being so thick around it. But, one night, I saw a light in that direction. Even then I wouldn't have noticed it, I expect, if it hadn't been behaving so funny. It went around in circles, then right, then left, then up and down, and to all quarters of the circle, and in all sorts of combinations of them. I thought it was some boys, maybe, playing with firesticks —as they often used to do in the hills about here. Next day I could see the window in the gable of the Crider tavern, for the first time in

my life—and, by hokey, the reason was that three trees in a northerly line from the window had been cut down!

I rode over.

"Ben," I says, "why did you cut those nice old trees down?"

"Fire-wood," says Ben briefly. "This war'll be making us do worse things than that before it's over. We'll be burning up our grain, eating our horses, and cows and mules, et cetera. About the only thing that will be plenty, presently, will be pure spring water—and I'd hate to live on that. A dollar'll cost two dollars and a half before the thing is done, and you'll have to give your farm to get a suit of clothes. Are you still so crazy for it?"

"I never was," says I. "I'm peaceful."

"So am I. Then why don't you help to stop it?" yells Ben. "No one *can* be peaceful. It's one side or the other. Where are you?"

"Me?" I says. "How can I stop it?"

"By fighting—joining the Knights—helping

the Underground—doing everything you can against it."

"What," I asks, "shall I make the Unions do? I'm Union, you know! You want me to help the rebels."

"Make Abe Lincoln let the South go her way. She deserves it. She'll go, anyhow. She's stronger than the North. Why shouldn't she? If you want to leave me, have I a right to pin you to your chair and keep you?"

"But you wouldn't rather have twenty or thirty little tomcat governments, none of 'em having any power or dignity, than this one great, grand, glorious Union?" says I.

"If the people want it that way—yes," says Ben, violent. "It's their country, not Abe Lincoln's."

"You can bet," says I, "that they'd be cutting down each other's trees then to beat the band!"

Ben flares up entirely unaccountable, and says:

"Who's cutting down *other* people's trees?"

"No one, yet, as I know," says I.

"I'll cut down my own as often as I please," says Ben.

"No, only once," says I.

"You're an ignorant fool!" says Ben.

"But that's so—ain't it—that you can't cut a tree down more than once?"

"Fool!" says Ben.

"Ben," I says on, "if it's fire-wood, why don't you cut it into cord sticks—instead of laying whole on the ground?"

Ben was a bit puzzled for a minute.

"Ain't had no time?" asks I.

He grabs on that.

"You bet not! This dam' war's a mighty busy business—night and day—especially night!"

"What's in the war to keep a lonely country tavern busy," says I, "especially at night? That's funny."

"Well, you try keeping one. First a company of Confederates comes and eats me out of

house and home. Then a regiment of Federals does the same."

"You get your house eaten pretty often, Ben," says I.

"Some one rides off with a horse," Ben goes on, "leaving me a polite note to the U. S. A. or the C. S. A., to pay for 'em. I got twenty such notes! Well, do you think any of 'em is going to get paid? And there are other things keep me busy and poor," but he didn't tell me these.

"You got hard luck, Ben," says I, "and I'll send the hireland over to cut your trees into fire-wood and help anything else."

"No, you don't," says Ben, more angry than I could see any excuse for. "You mind your own business and keep to your own pasture and I'll do the same. I know where *you* stand. And, while we're about it, you might as well know that the neighbors think some of your family had better join something—or enlist in the army—*one side or the other!*"

"Suppose, Ben," says I, "you take your own

advice and 'tend to your own business and keep behind your own fences and join things and enlist yourself—like they say you're doing. If you don't maybe there's a licking due you."

"Hah!" laughs Ben, "I wouldn't give much for the skin of any man who raises his hand against me! I can bring a thousand men up the valley in ten minutes."

"Well," says I, madder and madder, "I'll risk my skin and do it now—one against a thousand and one!"

And I would—if a squad of Unions hadn't rode up just then.

"Are these the aforesaid thousand?" I asked Ben. "All right if they're *that* color."

"No," says he. "They're not that color, dam' you!"

Of course everybody knew that Ben was a kind of secessionist—but I didn't know he was as outspoken and fighty as that. He use' to sit in "Africa" at the church—right out front.

The commanding officer studies us both for a minute, and looks up and down the valley,

then from the felled trees all about—especially at the house and the doors and the windows—and whether any other house could be seen from them. But no house except mine could have been seen from Crider's—and mine was hid, just as his had been, by thick trees.

"What are these trees cut down for?" he asks me, thinking I owned them.

"Fire-wood," grins I. "The soldiers eat me out of fire-wood all the time."

"Why aren't they made into fire-wood then? They can't be eaten this way."

"Too busy."

The officer smiles a little, then says—sudden:

"Where's Lucas Mallory?"

"Again, please," says I, "I never heard that name before. Is it a bird or a beast?"

"A man."

"An Irishman? You're in the wrong county for Irishmen. Three counties further on. Try something Dutch."

"Don't know anything of Lucas Mallory,

eh? Well, then, what do either of you know of Sharon Lodge of the K. of the G. C.?"

"What is that, sir?" asks Ben, very polite and dumb and innocent.

"Oh, hell!" says the officer. "Knights of the Golden Circle. What are your names? I suppose you know *that?*"

I gave him mine. But when it came time for Ben to give his he says: "Phineas Brown, sir," kind of simple, winking to me.

The officer wrote that down.

"And where is Crider's?" says he.

Ben winked at me again and says:

"Some six miles further south. In this direction. Crider passed through here not more than twenty minutes ago, sir, that road, south, sir."

"What does Crider look like?"

"He's a tall bald man with whiskers, and looks sneaky," says Ben.

At that the officer faces his men about and goes off south at a hard gallop.

"That's not a good photograph of *you,* Ben," says I. "Except, maybe, the 'sneaky' parts."

"You bet not. I suppose I'm drafted and they're looking for me," says Ben. "I'm going to the woods. You had better do the same for a while—in another direction. Don't forget you've been seen with me." He laughs like the joke's on me.

And Ben actually starts toward the woods and away from his house.

I went home—a good deal mixed.

VIII

DAVE

AND, a little while afterward, who do you think walks in the house, entirely unexpected? Dave!

My! My old heart got stuck in my throat and nearly choked me to death. Dave laughs like a fiend and pounds me on the back, like they do children that are strangling.

"Now you better, daddy?" he laughs at last, setting me up careful, in a chair. "What was it? Meat or tobacco?"

"What do you want here," I says, "beating up the kindest and most unfortunate daddy in the world? Sit down!" and he sits down on top of me, nearly bursting me open. "Go right back where you came from, you Johnny Reb!" —just in fun, of course. I was so happy!

"I won't!" says Dave. "I ain't of age yet and you got to keep me till I am. You can be

arrested and sent to jail for turning out such a nice son."

"Come along," says I. "We'll all be there sooner or later, anyhow—the way things are going. It'll be a fine place to keep a little boy out of mischief."

"Little boy!" says Dave, lifting me as easy, and carrying me around the room on his shoulder. "Now you behave!"

He slams me down in a chair and hugs me.

"Take notice," says he, "that I won't be crowded out of house and home by no second-hand female by-marriage cousin."

"Who told you about her?" asks I.

"Told me? Everybody along the road from Virginia to here. Ben Crider and she are good friends."

"Now, you don't say so," says I, a good bit soprized at that. "I wonder where she and Ben met."

"I don't know," says Dave, "but he thinks she's a noble woman!"

Dave laughs at that, as if he knew the sort

of nobility that would appeal to Ben. But I says:

"Oh, of course! She's a little bit rebel. Ben's a good bit secessionist—when there are no soldiers in blue uniforms about. That accounts for it."

"I expect they sit together on the top rail of the fence, like a couple of crows," says Dave, "and talk large talk about the war—fix it all up their way—"

"Till the soldiers come," laughs I, "then they take to the woods. Well, Davy," I goes on, like I was distressed, "she's here, the second-hand by-marriage female cousin, I can not tell a lie, and, therefore and henceforth and moreover, I can't keep you. There's no room. Back you go to Dixie," and I turns him around like I was aiming him south.

"Ain't the second-hand female cousin by marriage a rebel?" asks Dave. "You—"

"A-yes," says I.

"Under this Union roof! Phew! What?"

"Just a female one," snickers I.

"Down in Dixie they're more fighty than the male ones. Gosh—they kiss and run their sweethearts off to get shot. They hug their brothers—and push 'em in it. They make red-white-and-red flags out of their clothes and climb poles to put 'em up. If it was that way up here we'd lick 'em. But, as it ain't—they'll lick us. If it wasn't for the women Virginia wouldn't have seceded. But they got after the men and pushed 'em clean through it. If I hadn't got out between two days they was going to push me into something. I don't know what it was. Some of the boys say they smelled tar. Well—I hate tar except on an axle. Gosh! I saw three men hanging to trees as I took a walk northward in the moonlight. I was so scared that I forgot to go back and kept on here. I don't want anything to do with female rebels. They frighten me. They're *too* rebly. They ain't satisfied with just speeches and singing—like the men. They want to see and hear the real boom-a-lally-booms. I'll just keep on going till I get to

Washington. I'll bet Father Abraham'll be gladder to see me than you are. He's glad to see most any one that's fighty like me nowadays. I guess they've all gone back on the poor old man, and he can't lick the South without help. And suppose I get shot full of holes—it'll be his fault—and how'll *you* like the wind blowing through a nice son of yours—woo!—all on account of a second-hand cousin?"

"I'd rather have you air-tight," says I, and we both laughed hearty, at the joke.

"Say, dad," whispers Dave, "if we can't get shut of one another, maybe we can get shut of the second-hand cousin by marriage. Not?"

"Maybe," says I. "How?"

"There's jobs for her all through Virginia," says Dave: "hospital, sewing cartridge bags, making coffee out of rye and chicory, molding bullets, making uniforms, talking devilish patriotic—to make the men fighty. She can have her choice. Whichever she does best. Virginia's really the place for her. They're mighty busy rebelling down there."

"You ask her, Dave," says I.

"All right, I will," says Dave. "If she goes, I'll stay. If she stays, I'll go. I expect she has the usual requirements—store teeth, large hands and feet, whopper jaw, spectacles?"

"She has all of them," says I, "and others, too humorous to mention."

"Well, get out with the second-hand cousin," says Dave, after a while. "Why are we wasting time with her? Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. Where's old Jon? He's worth several thousand second-hand cousins. I want to go fishing with him—so's he can catch 'em and I can carry 'em home. Observe!"

And he cut a pigeon wing, stamped hard on the floor, like nigger shows, and sung:

"—Police he came to mend the job—
He ate the corn and all the cob—
The same as any other hog—
A-pulling off the green corn!
O-pulling off the green corn!
O-fetch along the demijohn!
O-come along, my yellow gal,
I'll meet you in the morning!

"Can't you come?
Oh, yes, I kin—
Same as any other thing—
Pulling off the green corn!"

Such foolishness! I'd have got mad at any body but Dave. And just then he was so handsome and ruddy that I was glad of him —glad that he was alive—happy—my son! Every time I looked at him I am reminded of David in the Bible. And I thought what a pity it was that such gay and handsome young fellows were going to war, North and South, to get shot, or cut with sabers or bayonets, maybe killed, maybe left to lie, bloating in the sun, like dead cattle. North or South—it was horrible.

"Dave," I says, thinking, too, of that night and Jon and Evelyn, "don't you think of going to war on either side. I want you here."

And Dave answers, smiling and soft:

"All right, daddy. I ain't in no hurry, if you ain't. I'll stay with you till I grow up."

"Honest, Dave?" says I.

"Honest, daddy," says Dave. "Now that I'm out of Virginia I'll have a real good chance to finish growing. But I don't think that anybody who lives down there'll ever grow up, but be cut off—a good lot of 'em—in the days of their youth. When the war is over they'll have to start another population."

"Is it really as bad as that?" I asks.

"It's worse," says Dave. "Nothing but war and rumors of war—and a little eating and sleeping now and then, when they happen to think of it. No one farms or works or earns anything. Everybody lives on the others."

"Dave," I says, "I'm right glad you came up —and didn't obey me for once."

"Once!" laughs Dave. "When was that? I don't remember ever obeying you."

"That's so," says I, "and I'm not mad about it now. You'll promise not to go to war on either side?"

"Not either or both sides," laughs Dave.

"Thank you, Davy," says I, pleased. "Shake hands on it?"

"You bet me I will," says Dave. "I'm not much of a fighter, anyhow. I expect I'm too lazy to lick or get licked. But I'm not going to war unless there's some one behind me pushing. Forget it. They can't make me. I'm not of age. I don't know what it's about. And where in hell's Jonthy? Here I come home to fish with him, and he don't come home and fish with me. It won't be like old times till Jonthy takes me on his back fishing—will it, daddy?"

"No," says I.

"And catches all the fish?"

"Yes."

"Daddy," says Dave, "you've heard of songs without words, I expect?"

"Yes, Davy."

"Well, daddy, when I fish, that's fishing without fish—not?"

And he sings another song—brought up from Virginia, I expect.

"Oh, so gaily we float,
On the water so blue,
In our tight little boat
And our jolly good crew—"

"Daddy," he runs on, "there's no one in the whole of Virginia like old Jonthy—maybe not in the whole world. I have an idea that when the Lord got away from here—just here—on this farm—you know—the good stuff gave out and he had to adulterate it. Where is he, anyhow? 'Oh, tell me where my Jonthy's gone!' "

"I expect he'll be around in a little. Can't you be satisfied with your father for a minute or two?" says I.

"Certainly, father!" says Dave, in fun, of course. *"Ich liebe dich, du liebst mich, wir lieben den* Jonathan—*aber nicht die* second-hand female cousin by marriage—ain't? Jonthy, Jonthy, Jonthy!" he yells, *"ich bin dort—dei' Bruder von* Virginia! *Komm schwindt!"*

IX

WHEN EVELYN CAME

WELL, just then, Evelyn, hearing the racket, I expect, came in. Dave thought it was Jon and hid behind the door and jumped out and yelled and flung his arms about her all at once. Gosh-a-mighty! He looked like he'd been shot—he was so surprised—and close! And Evelyn—she was as scared and trembly and fighty as a little heifer—and afterward tried to cry and get mad and look ugly—all at once. But it was no use. Dave held her by the hands and apologized like a gentleman of the highest kind. He bowed and scraped like she was a queen, and he a prince, and called her "madame"! But he didn't let her go. And Evelyn—at last she just stood still and listened, like his voice was music to her. Then she managed to look—sidewise—

like birds—and Dave caught her eyes fairly in his. So, for a minute. Dave looked the sorrow he had for being so fresh. She looked something I had never seen her look before. Then she hung her head and blushed and trembled. The business—the great and wonderful business of love—was done that quick! Dave had just mastered her by his gay, open, careless, manly ways. Broke her that quick—like he use' to break colts. Jon, he could manage animals by just persuading them. But Dave had no time for that. And he made them do what he wanted without any persuading—which is much better, for a horse, anyway. And women are a good deal like horses, not?

Soon Dave's big white teeth begun to show, till he laughed right out.

"I'll bet seventeen cows, and a calf, for good measure, that this is my cousin Evelyn that's crowded me out of house and home and left me nothing but the haymow!"

"Yes," says I, "whopper jaw, store teeth and all, ready for the hospital—"

Dave put his hand on my mouth so that it hurt.

"Yes, I'm that poor beggar," says Evelyn. "If they hadn't given me your room and things, you'd have found me at the poor-house, cousin Did-Dave. Would you have liked that, cousin Did-Dave?"

She stumbled twice on the "Dave". But Dave had no trouble with "Evelyn"! It seemed sweet in his mouth.

"No," says Dave, "I wouldn't have liked that. But, now, if you don't take me in partnership, I'll have to go—to the haymow—a—and you won't like that!"

"Hi—how can I, Did-Dave?" asks Evelyn. "Partnership?"

Dave just breathes his answer:

"I don't know. It is all so sudden—and wonderful. Some day I will tell you. May I?"

"Yes," says Evelyn.

"We'll be comrades, Evelyn! We'll ride and swim and hunt and fish—always together! Will you like that?"

"Oh, yes!" says Evelyn.

"And then we'll see the roses bloom in these cheeks—lovely enough now—but think of them with roses in!"

And he kissed them both—just a touch on each.

Evelyn started back, angry, but when she looked and saw his glorious young face she returned—maybe for more!

The sweet way he talked to her—of the things they were to do—the happiness they were to have! Presently, like she didn't know she was doing it, Evelyn inched up and hung her arm in Dave's, as happy as he. You have no idea and I am too poor a scholar to tell it. He had won her like with magic. I felt that she would follow Dave, like a dog, to the ends of the world. Her master had come.

"And what am I to teach you in return for all these beautiful things?" asks Evelyn, at last.

"Many, many more things than I can teach you, cousin, dear," says Dave, taking her face

in his hands and questioning her eyes. "Some I can not tell you now, because they have taken no form save great joy. Some are too dear to speak of yet. But, I know, already, that I shall be graver, kinder, more considerate of others. Perhaps you may even teach me, out of your own sad lot, what sorrow is. Now I do not know it. You hardly believe that, and I'm ashamed to confess it. But daddy and Jon have kept all sorrow from me, while you have probably had my share. Perhaps I can help to lighten yours. Or bear them with you. I wonder why I'm so serious? I never was before, was I, daddy?"

"Take care, Davy," says I. "You're going mighty fast. And there's rapids in the river below you! Mebby falls!"

I wonder if he heard me? I think not. But that was funny—wasn't it? To think of that!

"Come, help me to find Jonthy!" he says to Evelyn.

She'd inched up so close to him that, I suppose, it would have been hard to get closer.

But the moment he asks her to help hunt Jon she smiles and gives him her hand and they start away.

Now, ain't a woman funny? I thought when Dave said that about taking her to Jon she would be scared and guilty and not go. Not at all. She never thought about that. In fact, this Evelyn that Dave had discovered was entirely new—even to herself, I think. Who'd have thought of the same Evelyn who thundered to Jon, that night, about the great cause, forgetting all about it—and Jon, too!—the minute Dave takes hold of her hands!

Before they got out of sight I heard Dave say:

"—And, then, we'll get married!"

"Yes!" says Evelyn, as happy as he.

"And live happy ever after!"

"For ever and ever!" laughs Evelyn.

Well, as you can see, they weren't wasting a minute.

Presently I hears 'em all three coming up from the barn together, where, I suppose, they

had found Jon. Evelyn was between the two. Dave was swinging her one hand and singing:

"Dear Evelina,
Sweet Evelina,
My love for you shall never, never die!"

Jon looked as joyous as any of them—holding Evelyn's other hand—stiff and solemn. But, somehow, I pitied him. And it was strange, afterward, that I always thought of my two boys as poor old Jon and happy little Dave. Sorry for the one and glad for the other.

And that was my trouble—seeing my two boys in love with one girl, and that one girl in love with only one of them! What was I to do? What I might do for Dave would be against Jon—and vice versa. So I did nothing; I couldn't. My hands were tied.

X

THE PICNIC

ONE day Evelyn proposed that we all have a picnic to Rostrom Rock over there. But she was trembly and excited about it in a way I never saw before.

"It'll take us all day to go and come," says I.

"All the better," says she. "Betsy'll bring all of her best pies—and leave the armies to do without them for one day. Let us hurry to get off early."

"Is Betsy to go, too?" asks I.

"Everybody—even the hireland!" cries Evelyn, dancing—crazy—with unusual excitement.

I wasn't exactly pleased to eat ants with my pie. But Dave and Jon didn't care for a few ants more or less—if Evelyn went with 'em. Betsy was against me, saying that the idea was providential, inasmuch as she had

baked a fine lot of gooseberry pies! And not a soldier had come after 'em yet.

But I said no!—and put my foot down, and Evelyn said yes and put hers down.

And so it stood—both stubborn.

Then Evelyn backed down herself—sudden.

"No, we won't go," she says. "I'm afraid. I daren't do it. I won't—I won't do it!"

And she starts away to the house, and up to her room. I saw her look out the window, and swing her arms.

But she had hardly reached it before she came running back, scared and excited, saying:

"Yes—come on. We got to go. It's orders."

"Don't you feel well, Evelyn?" asks Jon.

"No," says Evelyn, then, "yes."

"We'd better not go," says Jon.

"I don't know what to do—I don't know what—yes, we've got to do it. If I disobey—"

She didn't waver any more. But I was still stubborn. Though after Betsy said gooseberry pies I had wobbled.

"I hardly think there will be any left, after the picnic," says Betsy, and that she had about used up the crop.

That finished me. Gooseberry pies—Betsy's kind—with molasses instead of sugar in—was my besetting sin from my youth up. The boys' mother used to set 'em up for me when I went to see her nights, to catch me. Well, they done it—notwithstanding many a colic—and the Jamaica ginger she gave me for the way home. And she had taught Betsy to make 'em her way. So I went on that picnic just to get a last piece of gooseberry pie! And it was the last for years to come. Eight miles going and eight miles coming for three—no four, pieces of pie—and a pain! What do you think of that for an old fool! But I wasn't so old then as I am now—though even now—I fall to gooseberry pie!

The hireland filled the hay wagon with straw, and we all sat on the bottom. I never saw Dave so happy. He just stretched out in the hay with his back against the seat aside of

Evelyn, and enjoyed her. And she seemed to enjoy Dave. Though now and then a funny scare would come over her face like she remembered something and she would look back the way we had come. For, as we were climbing upward most of the time, you could look back at our house a couple miles of the way. She made Jon come to her other side.

And once I heard her whisper, when she was scared that way:

"Oh, God! I hope they won't! I hope they can't!"

"Won't and can't what?" asks I.

"Beat me!"

Right away she laughs—and begins a game with old Jonthy.

It's piling hands on top of one another and pulling them from under and getting caught and kissed. It didn't take Jon long to catch her—for she was always looking back that way.

"Kiss her, Jonthy," laughs Dave, and Jon he kissed the hand he had caught.

"No," says Dave. "You're entitled to one right here—"

Dave kissed her smack on the lips.

"One, to *your* credit, Jonthy," says Dave.

And then, just absently, when she was looking back that way, and Jon was looking up at her, she catches him!

"Now you got to kiss him!" says Dave, and holds Jon fast while he makes Evelyn kiss him. She don't know she's doing it—always looking back.

Well, you'd think if there was anything to show on Jon's face it would be blushes. But he closed his eyes and got pale as a sheet.

And then he made Dave play and get caught —and even me! And Betsy!

Jonthy got away into a corner of the wagon and lay there with his eyes closed and his face still pale, as if he wanted to keep what he had.

When we got about a mile or so from the house—down over some hills—where you couldn't even see the chimleys, Evelyn stops

looking back and is happier—so happy that we all had a nice time—even the hireland.

Well, I hadn't wanted to go, but, after all, it was fine. I fell in the Ice-Spring, and a snake bit Jon. Otherwise it was a good picnic.

Coming back, it was just like all picnics—all was tired and we lay on our backs in the yellow straw and let the hireland drive. The three youngsters, with little help from me, were happy as happy, and sang a lot of the old songs that took me back to my wife in her grave: *Annie Laurie, Her Bright Smile Haunts Me Still, Home Sweet Home,* and so on, until we begun to get near home. Then every little while Evelyn would rise and look down the valley—until about that same mile from home, when she shivered a bit after looking, and slid down into the straw, cuddled up between Jonathan and Dave, and began to cry.

"What makes you cry, dear?" asks Dave.

She said nothing.

"Often," says nice old Jonthy, always ready with oil on the water, "women cry for—joy!"

"Yes!" sobs Evelyn.

"And, it has been a very happy day, hasn't it, sister, dear?" says old Goliath.

Evelyn nods and slips an arm about each of the boys.

The sun was just setting. We were driving toward it. The three faces were before me. Jon's was white—with the eyes staring and the hands clenched.

Evelyn was scared—and breathing hard and fast—harder and faster as we got nearer home. Her hands were clenched, too—and unconsciously she drew the boys as hard to her as she could, as if they were both to protect her from something.

Dave's face was full of pure—almost childish—joy! Just nothing but joy! He was singing—all alone this time. But he had a bully big tenor voice and I liked to hear him. The nearest neighbors didn't.

"Dear Evelina,
Sweet Evelina,
My love for you shall never, never, die!"

Then, night fell. At the last I could still see the eyes of Jon and Evelyn staring out of the dusk. And Dave's voice, softer and softer, kept on singing:

"—My love for you shall never, never die!"

So we came home. It was very dark. The hireland told us to stand still and hold the horses till he got a lantern. My boys stood, one on each side of Evelyn. Dave was singing the last strain:

"—never, never die!"

We started away to the house as soon as the hireland got his lantern going. Evelyn left the boys and took my arm. For some reason we were all very quiet. It was queer.

I thought I saw several shadows move away from the house in the darkness.

"What is that, Evelyn?" I asks. "Men? What are they doing here?"

I was a little excited.

Evelyn quiets me and says:

"Sh! No. I thi—think it's the cows. They were lying down and we disturbed them. Yes —it was the cows."

"Not on your life," says I. "The cows wouldn't run for us. Anyhow, it would be the first time they ever got out of the way. They'd let you fall over 'em first. We got to be careful about men around the place. I didn't think of it till now. But there's been no one about all day! It's war-times, Evelyn, and, if you ever see any one about you must tell me."

"Yes, daddy, dear," she says, excitedly.

"We'll look around and see whether they've taken anything," says I.

Things looked queer, even in the dark. And, first I know, I tumbles over a tree!

Well! Some one had cut down the finest oak in the circle around the house!—on the south side!

"My great-grandfather Hiliary planted that tree," says I, hot and hard, "and it would be as much as his life would be worth for me to find the rascal who did it!"

Dave smells the chips and says:

"It's just been finished!"

Jon rubs his hand over the stump.

"The sap is still as thin as water," says he. "It hasn't been down ten minutes. I've cut down enough trees to know!"

"Come," says Dave, "he's not far away. That was him—or them—daddy saw. Come on, we can get him!"

He starts away, fighty as a young bull. But Evelyn clutches him.

Then she acts as if she didn't know why she done it.

"Don't—don't—leave me alone," she says, at last, and the way she was trembling proved that she oughtn't to be left alone.

Jonthy, he comes up and takes hold of Dave.

"Yes," he says, "there is something better than trees—after all—here to be anxious about. We've forgotten it in our anger."

Of course, Dave is scared about Evelyn and gives it up—killing the marauders.

Jon and Dave had things to say, nevertheless, not warranted by Scripture, or their training, about secessionists and sympathizers getting even. But Evelyn said nothing—only I could feel her shaking.

"What do you think of this business, Evelyn?" asks I. "You got a good head."

"It was a bi—beautiful tri—tree, daddy, dear," she says, "and—and I think I will go to bed!"

And she starts right off, without another word, crying like a baby.

We were all stumped for a minute, and then, nice old Jon, as usual, fixes it.

"She loved that tree, daddy and Dave," and he puts his arms around both of us, and I know he was smiling that inward smile of his, "it was right before her window. She loved it just as she loves us—and, just as if one of us should be cut down in his strength, she weeps for it! Come! We can't quite weep. But we can understand her weeping—can't we, daddy and Dave? She loved it!"

Yes, says Dave, and yes, says I. But I don't think either of us understood that like dear old Jonthy did.

The idea didn't occur to me until I saw it accidentally, some time after—that there was now a clear space between Crider and us! He could see our chimley-tops. From our garret window I could see his. And even then I didn't know what to do with the idea.

But Jon did.

He said that since our quarrel, about which I had told him, Crider was angry. He was a bad man to have against one, and had got even by doing for us what we had thought suspicious when he did it for himself.

"Yes," I says, "that's just it—the fire-wood business— Well, I'll let him know about it —maybe with a club!—right off the old tree!"

"No, no," laughs Jon. "No fighting just now. No more enemies than we must make. Keep the peace, daddy, so that we keep our heads," laughs Jon. "We need 'em now—and

here. Especially if our neighbors don't like our trees."

And as that seemed good advice, I let Crider pass a number of times when I could have tripped him over the bank into Mud Creek—where he belonged.

XI

OF THE CHANGE WHICH DAVE BROUGHT

DAVE'S coming was the beginning of a great change all around. He and Evelyn never noticed it. I had heard tell, before, that love was the most selfish thing on earth, and didn't believe it. But I could see it now, right before my eyes. Evelyn took to the riding and fishing and swimming, just as hard as Dave said she would. At last she could do them all as well as Dave himself—at least, so he said. And it did for Evelyn all that Dave had said it would. She got strong and graceful as a deer, and it was a sight, I can tell you, to see them tearing up the Red Rock Road, early in the morning, while the way was still too damp for dust, she on Dave's black, and he on another black he'd traded in to match her. I never saw such riding anywhere. I use' to

sneak up to the Chestnut Woods, where the road ran through a cut, just to see 'em fly past —laughing and yelling, and playing monkey shines, and making believe to outrun each other but never getting far apart. They wasn't only two, they was four. And the horses knew it as well as any one. Yes, Dave brought the roses to her cheeks—like he said—and something, I expect, they hadn't counted on so much: a happy hungry look that wasn't satisfied without Dave was right there to satisfy it.

And another thing they hadn't bargained for was nice old Jon. When any one was looking he smiled and kept busy. But when he thought he was alone, the look of one deserted came over him. Of course, Dave didn't know anything. But Evelyn did, and I often wondered if she never thought of that night under the plum trees. I don't think she ever did. Yes, love is selfish.

One day Dave and Evelyn came running in to dinner, just off the horses, with extra red cheeks, and I saw the old yearning come

strong into Jon's eyes. Sometimes he couldn't keep it out. I expect Dave saw it, too.

"No, no, Jonthy," he says, "you can't have 'em. They're mine. I made 'em."

"What?" asks I. I suppose I am a little dull at the head—like the soldiers said.

"These!" says Dave, and up and kissed both her cheeks.

Evelyn clapped both hands on 'em, like she was ashamed—but happy. Dave just took her hands away and did it again.

"Yes, Jonthy, dear, they're mine. In fact, Jonthy, the whole girl's mine—from here to here. Ain't you glad? Ain't you, daddy?"

He motioned from her head to her feet.

"Yes," says Jon, dragging it out by the roots, "I am glad, Dave, old boy!"

He slaps Dave on the back and laughs, but he couldn't go any further.

"I forgot to feed the cows!" he says, and rushes out!

Jon couldn't stand any more of that. He managed for a while to be about with them as

often as usual, and smiled as much, but never for more than a minute at a time—too little for anything to happen in. In fact, after a while, he arranged to be busy when we ate, pleading that in case the war brought us trouble we ought to have everything ready to abandon—which was true—because it was at the table that things like the rose business, mostly, happened. And, after a while, he always ate alone—and no one missed him but me. And I saw that this, hard as it was for old Jon, was best—even for him. Yes, love is selfish. They didn't notice.

Finally, Jon was in the fields or the barn all the time and we saw almost nothing of him. I would take most of his meals out to him. And according to Jon, so that he might not disturb the rest of us, he would often stop at the barn and sleep with the hireland. At last he slept in the barn all the time—just, I think, so that Dave could be in his bed, and near Evelyn. At first I could hardly believe that Dave would let it go at that. But he went and

slept in Jon's bed without so much as a "Thank-you-sir," and let Jon sleep in the barn with Wasser and the hireland. In fact, he never noticed it.

So it went on till I thought Jonathan the loneliest boy in the whole world, and Dave the happiest—and most thoughtless. And the more Dave forgot Jon, the more Jon remembered Dave. He just brooded over him, like a hen with one little chicken. Dave didn't see anything but Evelyn. But I saw the thousands of little things Jon put in the way of Dave's happiness, and the other thousands he took out of it. I reckon no boy's road to heaven was ever made so smooth.

Like this: Dave took a little cold, or something, and got hot in the night. Once in a while Jon'd sneak in the house, when Dave was asleep, and go up to his room and look at him—just stand and look. When I caught him at it, he said that he'd come to get some of his things in the room. But I knew better. He came to look at Dave—nothing

less. Else why were there tears in his eyes? Do you suppose he cried about getting his Sunday coat out of the closet? Well, he happened to come that night Dave was hot. He sees his flushed face, feels his pulse, runs out and jumps on the new black and rides to town for the doctor. Coming back the black jumped the bars and run in the open stable door with the bit in his teeth and broke Jon's head. It was a trick Dave taught the horse that Jon didn't know of. Dave used to lay down on the side of her neck.

When the doctor came it was Jon he had to fix up. He was out of his head a good while. Dave and Evelyn stayed with him and nursed him faithful, and I thought now they would take notice and things would be better. But as soon as Jon got better he'd make 'em go out for a walk—or something—and soon it was the same old thing—and they let Jon get well himself. Jon was Dave's guardian angel, and Dave didn't even know that he had one!

And what was I to do? Do you think I slept all night and every night in the midst of this? I thought of a thousand ways to end it. But I always came up against the same stone walls. Helping one would hurt the other.

Yet, now, when Jon got about again, and I must see his sunken blue eyes, and his broken and unsteady ways, it seemed like I must do something.

"Jonthy," I says—we were out under the plums again—"it is time we had some talk."

"Yes, daddy," smiles Jon, taking hold of my hand, "go on."

"I see the whole thing, Jonthy, and I hate to meddle, but I must."

"What whole thing?" smiles Jon.

"That Dave has forgotten your existence," says I, "and that you remember his ten times as much as ever. That he's taken Evelyn—"

"Ah, hush, daddy," says Jon, still smiling, "would you say a word, do a thing, to diminish that wonderful happiness?"

"Wouldn't you?" I asks.

"Not a word, not a thing," smiles Jon. "On the contrary, dear old daddy, I spend half the time I ought to sleep thinking of ways to make the happiness more and more wonderful. I thought I loved her, daddy. I told her it was the greatest love ever man had for woman. But, daddy, the wonder of Dave's love makes me ashamed of mine. And hers! It is as great as his. Why, what is it that he forgets us? We are small things in his world. And how can it be otherwise? There is nothing but her for him, nothing but him for her. Daddy, I was an apprentice. I had to learn love. But Dave *is* it. Didn't you notice how he put it on like a garment the moment he saw her? Well, it was a garment that was waiting for him from the beginning of the world. It didn't have to be fitted—like mine. And she! When they met it was, at last, as if her restless militant spirit had found its nest. She put her head upon his heart and slept."

"No, she didn't do that," I said. "I was there!"

"Daddy, dear, I mean," laughs nice old Jon, "that, there, like Christian, in *Pilgrim's Progress,* which I am sure you know, she laid down all her burdens and was at rest. Do you understand now?"

"Yes," I says to my son, "I understand what you mean—though it didn't happen; and thank you, Jonthy, for having such beautiful thoughts about Dave and Evelyn, true or false, after the way they treat you."

"Ah, the way they treat me! If they didn't do that, it would not be the wonderful thing it is. The way they treat me! Why, daddy, that is the thing which makes me most glad! That is the proof that it *is* wonderful. Have you never experienced the heavenly sensation of giving up for another—yes, for another you love more than yourself?"

"Jonthy," says I, "here you go out of my sight and hearing again. Return. If you

mean the happy-with-another business, no. I had the chance when I was courting your mother."

"And you did it?"

"I broke his head."

"Ah, but he wasn't your brother. Yes, I think, if any one but Dave had taken her, I would break his head."

XII

DAVE'S BUSINESS

STRANGE things happen in war—like I said—especially when one lives so close to it. And so, funny people kept coming and going, asking funny questions. At last Evelyn said, kind of shivery, she'd better see 'em, they'd be polite to her—so's to keep me from breaking the commandments all to pieces—just in fun, of course. And so she did—mostly getting rid of them easy. Soldiers were passing all the time, and stopping to water their horses and fill their haversacks and ask questions, and not always Union soldiers. Only the Unions rode in the daytime and the others rode mostly at night.

But one day a squad of Union cavalry rode up and pounded on the door with their carbines—not even bothering to water the horses

at the trough! Evelyn was "in town," as she said, where she'd been going often of late—sighing and dragging herself off. Jon was fishing. I answered the door.

"Can't you wait a minute?" yells I, from the up-stairs. "Don't break in the door. There's not much of it left, so many of yous come pounding on it. I ain't no Knight, or sympathizer, or spy."

"What's your name?" asks the lieutenant as soon as I got the door open.

I'd got used to answering that, so I says, as sharp as he:

"Stephen Vonner."

The lieutenant turns and nods to his men.

"*He's* telling the truth, boys, anyhow!"

He was the same man that had asked our names at Crider's.

"How many in your family?"

"Three," says I.

"Men or women?"

"Men."

"No children or ladies?" he asks savage.

"Betsy, the cook," says I, "but she's no lady. Hired. Anyhow, ladies don't count."

"Let us see her," commands the officer.

I calls her and Betsy comes. She's so fat I have to step aside so she can get through the door. They all laughs and the officer says:

"Betsy, go back to your cooking."

"And next, you'll be asking for pies!" says Betsy, wheeling so sudden she almost knocked me over.

"Ah! Wait!" calls the officer. "You, yourself, have sealed their doom, Betsy. We haven't time to stop for the dinner you are cooking. But—pies!"

He opens his haversack and shows that it is empty. And, at a motion from him, his men do the same.

"Betsy," he goes on, "these brave fellows are fighting for you—that you may stay here—and bake pies—for, I can see in one look, that you are Union. Now, Betsy, what do you think?" He points to the empty haversacks.

Says Betsy:

"I always keep something on hand for them—" she points to the haversacks too!—"ever since the war began!"

And Betsy filled them while they all clapped their hands, like at theaters. Doughnuts, pies, tied between tin plates so's they wouldn't get broke, bread wrapped in napkins, sweet cakes, coffee in little tin boxes, flour in bags, and even jam in sardine boxes! That's the kind of Union old Betsy was!

The soldiers took off their hats.

"Betsy," says the lieutenant, "it's such as you that's going to save the Union. You're worth a regiment of fighting men. You know, an army moves upon its belly. And you provide the belly. Boys, three cheers for Betsy!"

And they gave 'em, while Betsy wipes her eyes.

"I do my share, Lieutenant," says Betsy, "and a little more, because some others on the border don't!"

The officer got back to business right straight.

"What do you mean?" he asks, in that sharp way.

"The border's honeycombed with spies and sympathizers," says Betsy.

"Who? You know some of them!" says the officer.

Betsy says:

"No, I don't know any of 'em, but I know their doings. Ain't the church nailed shut? Where'll I go on Sunday now?"

Betsy goes away, and the officer looks thoughtful for a moment. Then he says to another officer:

"Betsy's loyal—that's certain."

They laugh together.

"Any others in your household?" asks the officer.

"One more," says I, "but she's only a girl —and, anyhow, she's gone away."

"When did she go?"

Well, I didn't want 'em riding after Evelyn and bothering her—scaring her to death with questions—so, I answers:

"Oh, some time ago. I don't remember just when."

Which was, really, exactly true.

"When do you expect her back?"

I just shakes my head, like I'd say I don't know, but leaving him to read it "Never," if he liked. You just couldn't tell them fellows everything.

"Was she your daughter?"

"*Ach,* no!" says I, real hearty.

"Any relation?"

"No relation at all," says I. "Just a caller."

"Oh!" says they. "A caller!" and laughs.

Well—that's nearly so. I meant visitor.

"There were only two men in your family a while ago," says the officer to me. "Where—who is the other one?"

"The other one?" I laughs. "Why, Dave, of course."

"Who's Dave?"

"Dave? My boy."

"Where did he come from?"

"Virginia," says I.

"Oh!"

And a whole lot of "ohs" echoed from the men.

"What was his business there?"

"School—he was going to college."

"There are colleges all about you here—Baltimore, Philadelphia, Washington—better ones than any in Virginia. Why was he sent there?"

"Goshens," says I, "that's the first time I ever been asked that question and the first time I ever thought about it. I don't know—oh—I expect it's because all the Vonners which got educated, went to William and Mary College. Mebby that's it. We all do as our fathers done."

"Shrewd!" says the officer to the man behind him, who nods yes.

Well, that's the first —and, be goshens,—the last—time any one ever called me that!

"Sure he has come just now? All *Union* men left Virginia long ago. Had to."

"Man!" says I, "why he's, why he's just a

boy—our baby. He don't know Union from pot-cheese! No, nor rebel, either. And he's been home some time. You don't know the news."

That sort of stopped them for a minute.

"Let us see him," says the officer then.

I turns and yells in the house, funny:

"Little Davy, come out. Some gentlemen wants to see you. I don't want 'em to, but they won't go unless you come toddling out!"

And I laughs to think how they'd be fooled when they saw—my baby.

Well, they was—and not over well pleased to be fooled.

Dave comes loafing to the door in his shirt-sleeves, looking bigger than ever. He was reading something—a newspaper scrap—and didn't bother much about the soldiers.

"Baby, eh?" says they, and laughs most as hard as I had. "Very shrewd."

Then the officer says, again to the one behind him:

"What do you make of it? Why were we to think him a child? Too much or too little here?"

He touches his head.

"Too little," nods the officer.

"I don't agree with you. But the boy?"

"Maybe," nods the second in command.

Then the officer says to Dave:

"What were you doing down in Virginia, my little boy?"

"Eating and drinking and sleeping, my tall old man," says Dave. "What are you doing up in Maryland?"

"Trying to find out what you are doing there!"

"Well, go on," says Dave. "I'm sorry for you."

"Why?" asks the officer.

"You don't look like you loved work."

"What's your business?" asks the soldier.

"Loafing," says Dave.

"And how long has that been your business?"

"Ever since," answers Dave.

"And how long is that?"

"Ask daddy, here. He begun it. I was born that way."

"How long have you lived here?"

"Ask daddy," says Dave. "He's got it in a book somewheres, I expect."

"If you won't tell me what you were doing down in Virginia, and exactly when you came North, and why, perhaps you'll tell me what you are doing here now?"

"Same thing," says Dave, "as in Virginia."

"Oh!" says the second in command, as if he had found something out, "the same thing! You notice that he says he is doing *the same thing* up here!"

"Are you doing it alone," asks the officer, "or have you help?"

"Oh! I have a good deal of help. Most every man round who knows what I am doing wants to help."

"You don't say so! Reports made it bad

enough, but I didn't think it was that bad. Thank you. Go on."

"My real name, and it's real name, and everything?" says Dave.

"Never mind your name and its name. We know them both. Proceed with the rest."

Then Dave turns to the officer and kicks the boards with his toes, like he's guilty of something.

"I might as well be honest with you," he says, "since you're bound to know."

"That sounds better," nodded the officer to his second. "Go on. You'll not regret telling me."

"I have been doing one thing up here that I didn't do down there," admits Dave.

"Aha!" cries the lieutenant, slapping the sergeant, hearty. "Now we're getting to it. I told you so." To Dave he says, nice and sweet: "Go on. I can not promise you immunity, but I will promise the lightest punishment that the government can inflict."

"Goshens! Does the government punish it?" asks Dave.

"It does, sir. The punishment is death, sir. But, sir, so kind and merciful is our president that any one who confesses and satisfies the president that he will do so no more—ahem!—I think I can promise, at least, that he will not die for it."

"Death?" says Dave. "That's a hard punishment for—"

"Not at all. No, sir, death is the only fit punishment for it."

"What's the matter with marriage?" asks Dave, solemn as an owl.

"Marriage?" says the officer. "No one has mentioned marriage."

"I know better," says Dave. "I have, a lot of times."

"Well, sir? Come, make a clean breast of it and I'll do what I can—"

"What's the use—" says Dave, in a pout—"what's the use—my breast may as well stay dirty—if it's wrong—to be in—"

"Come, come! We are losing time. Campbell will take it down."

Campbell got out some paper and a pencil.

"Now, sir, quickly, and briefly, what was the other thing you did when you came North from Virginia?"

"Fell in love," says Dave, still solemn.

"What? What's that? Campbell, never mind, just yet. Now, then, sir, repeat that and I'll arrest you!" yells the officer.

"Then I won't repeat it," says Dave.

"Do you hear that, Campbell?—he refuses to repeat his confession. Put him under—"

Campbell salutes and says:

"The only thing he has confessed, sir, as far as I can see, is that he has fallen in love."

"Is that so, sir?" thunders the lieutenant. "That you have confessed nothing but falling in love?"

"That's all," sighs Dave, like he was tired, and winking hard at me.

"Well, sir, I've a great mind to arrest you for that, sir!"

"I'm sorry," says Dave. "I didn't know that I could be arrested for it."

By this time all the soldiers was laughing at the fool-officer. And mad! Phew!

For a minute I didn't know whether he was going to run Dave through the bosom with his sword, or not. Then he slaps the other two on the shoulders, put his sword up, and they all laughs like blazes.

"Constantly looking for treason makes one silly about it, I guess," he says to the others. "I got what I deserve." To Dave he says: "I won't arrest you—just yet. I'm rather inclined to shake your hand. I like a man who gets the better of me—and is in love!"

He held out his hand and Dave takes it. But, as he does so, he exposes the newspaper scrap that he has been reading.

"What have you been reading?" asks the officer. "I may not be so far off, after all."

"Nothing," says Dave, indifferent.

But the officer takes the paper out of his hand.

"Jefferson Davis's speech last week at Chattanooga!" he says. "'Why the Confederacy can not fail.'"

"Excuse me. I was reading the other side," says Dave. "The little rebel girl I'm in love with sent it to me. See? The other side is poetry. Give it back to me."

But the officer put it in his pocket.

"Is this girl Southern?" asks the officer.

"Lord!" says Dave. "The Southernest of the Southern! She's the rebelest rebel yet! If all the rebel soldiers would fight as hard as she does, the war wouldn't last a month!"

"The one we spoke of a while ago?" laughs the officer.

"The same one," answers Dave.

"You are going to marry her?" asks the officer.

"She'll never get away from me!" says Dave. "If I die for it—like you said."

"That's fine," says the officer. "But I suppose it will be some time yet, before you go to Virginia to marry her, Mr.—Mr. Mallory?"

He sprung it on Dave just like on me. But Dave never winked.

"Vonner," says Dave, easy as you like, "Dutch, not Irish."

"Yes? Excuse me," says the officer. "But, if there were such a person hereabouts you would know it, eh?"

"Daddy would," says Dave. "He knows everything, and he'd be sure to tell me. He can't keep no secret, can you, daddy?" and he winks at me, right before them all.

"So I supposed, Mr. Mallory."

Then Dave got mad

"Vonner, I told you. What are you about, anyhow? Suppose you tell us where *you* came from and what *you* are and where *you* are going? Don't think because you're in brass buttons and blue clothes that you own the universe. We see enough uniforms about here not to be scared of 'em."

"And some gray ones, I have no doubt, Mr.—"

"Vonner," says Dave, "for fear you'll for-

get it again. Yes, lots of gray ones. And, anyhow, they don't bother us as much as the blue ones. They're a heap-sight more polite."

"I believe you, Mr.—"

"Vonner."

"Yes, that's quite natural. Thank you for a pleasant morning. I shall hope to meet you again."

"Not if I see you first," laughs Dave.

"No," nods the officer, "not if you see me first. I'll take care of that! And I'll keep an eye on this love-affair, too. It interests me. I like love-affairs. We shall be sure to meet again, Mr. Mallory," and he laughs and winks, as he rides off. "For you're sure to stay here —now that we know *its* name and yours."

"There's that Mallory again," says I, when they were gone.

"Where?" says Dave. "If you'll show him to me I'll spoil his face. I suppose he looks like me."

"Is that the reason you want to spoil his face?"

"Yes. I won't have a twin round here where Evelyn is. She might take him for me."

We laughs and slaps each other—just in fun, as any one can see.

XIII

WERE THERE UNIONS OR CONFEDERATES IN HARG'S WOODS?

I HAPPENS to be at the dormer window a couple of minutes later, and sees the soldiers at the turn in the Red Rock Road. Only about half of the squad was there. I wondered what had become of the rest—until three days later, when I meets them camped in Harg's woods, just about a half-mile away.

About the same time I notices that there's always some one, dressed in any kind of old clothes, where he can see the back door, and another where he can see the front door.

Dave notices these loafers, too.

"They're just stealing green corn and potatoes," says he. "Let them alone. It won't hurt us much and will give them colic."

"But, where do they come from?" I asks.

"There's a camp of Johnnies in Harg's woods."

"Davy," says I, "you need the eye-doctor."

"Why?" says Dave.

"They're Unions."

"Rebels."

"Unions."

And so we went on denying, till Dave dragged me around to see.

Well, it looked like he was right.

"It's funny," says I, "but you fellows look exactly like the Unions that was down at my house, there, the other day. I remember your faces."

"All soldiers look alike," laughs one.

"Not on your life," says I. "I could swear that you—. What you doing here, anyhow? It's dangerous. Unions are about most all the time."

"Yes, it's dangerous," nods the soldier, "but we're looking out." And he makes monkey shines with his hands and fingers to Dave and me. "And you're assisting us to look out, eh?"

"What's it all about?" asks Dave.

"We are helping some bulky material South by the Underground," says he. "And all the assistance we can get just now is needed."

He makes more monkey-business with his hands and feet. Up, down—right, left—circles, all around.

"You don't need to be so exceedingly careful, Mr. Vonner—"

He looked straight at me with some more signs.

"—and Mr. Mallory—"

Straight at Dave with the same hocus-pocus.

"—you're among friends."

"Lunatics," says Dave. "The asylum is at Mount Hope, about twenty miles away. Did you get out or are you on your way in?"

"Do you mean to say that you don't understand?"

"The deaf and dumb language is foreign to us," says Dave.

"Is this the same?" asks one, turning the lapel of his coat and showing a badge made by

cutting the Indian head out of one of the big, old, copper cents.

"The same," says Dave.

"Let me see that," says I.

He handed it over to me.

"Well," I says, "when I was more a fool than I am now, I was a little bit of a Copperhead. This is the thing they used to wear to show each other who they was."

"And you couldn't do so little for the cause as to help run a few mules across the border to-night, and lead a few recruits south of the Potomac, you and our other friends here?"

"I won't think of it," says Dave, "unless it's a thousand—mules. A few are not enough!"

He drags me off.

And that night at the table, Dave tells all about the fun he'd had that day, being taken for Mallory, and tells Evelyn he's going to take her around the next day, to have some fun, too, and see whether they'll take her for Mallory.

Evelyn got as white as a sheet, and nearly fell off her chair.

"Oh, well," says Dave, "if you feel that way we won't."

"I don't want to go—I don't want to go—" says Evelyn. Starting to her room.

She was sick in bed the next day.

XIV

BETSY'S PIES AGAIN

ANYHOW, another squad of Unions come around.

"Well," I says, "you're a funny lot. Now you're all dressed up in Union uniforms. What are you, anyhow? Unions or Johnnies?"

"Do you think you have seen us before?" laughs the lieutenant in command.

"I do," says I.

"We are here for the last time, to find out from the people, like yourself, whom we know to be loyal, what is going on at the Underground station, and in the Copperhead lodge of the Knights of the Golden Circle. Are you willing to help your country?"

"Well, how can I help you when I don't know anything?" say I. "I'm getting tired of this."

"So are we. And we are going to close the incident. Call out your whole family."

"There's no one here but me," I says.

They seemed mad about that.

"Mr. Vonner," says the officer, with his finger on me like a loaded gun, "there have been traitorous doings in this vicinity for a long time! Information goes south from here regularly of all our movements! Such bulky things as horses, provisions and recruits slip through the lines from here! Somewhere near the Knights of the Golden Circle meet! Now, then, do you mean to persist in saying that you live in this hotbed of treason and know nothing of any of these things?"

"Not a thing," laughs I. "You're fooled, Lieutenant. It ain't so."

"Well, let me tell you, sir, that the United States government is not so easily fooled. And its eyes are right on this place, just now—and on you! Take care. You may be as dull as you seem. You may not. Though all about

here seem to agree that *you* are an honest Union man."

"Yes, I am," I says, "straight through from here to here—"

I touched my bosom and my back.

"—and if anybody plays rebel monkey shines around here you'll know it as soon as I do."

"I like to hear that," says the officer.

He consults with his men, and then he turns to me and says—suddenly.

"Mr. Vonner, the Underground station is said to be not three miles to the south of this spot!"

"No!" says I, soprized like thunder.

"It is at Crider's tavern, or in that vicinity," said the officer.

"Well, by the Lord," says I, hot against Crider, "I owe him a few now. If he cuts up any tricks hereafter he'll get a load of buck-shot from the old flint-lock!"

"This will be better," says the officer, taking a carbine from one of his men and handing

it to me. "Give him your ammunition, Gross," he says to the man, and he emptied a double handful of brass cartridges into my hands.

"Now," said the officer, "*I* believe in you, though you and your sons are under suspicion. Prove your loyalty to the Union by keeping up a patrol of this vicinity. There's a spy near you. Mallory. He must be caught. *You* can catch him. He won't be on guard for *you*. If you meet any strangers—or even not strangers—who can not give an account of themselves, take them into custody. I am authorized to deputize you a provost marshal of the United States. If any one resists or will not stand, fire upon him."

"By the Lord, I will!" says I, hot.

"You so swear?" says the officer. "Hold up your right hand."

I did it.

"But there is a suspicious circumstance affecting you and your sons. Why aren't some of you in the Union army if you are loyal?"

"Well," I says, kind of humble, "that's so,

Mr. Officer. Some of us ought to go. We talk about it often. But Dave's young and reckless, and Jon's handsome. I hate to think about 'em being shot in the legs or cut in the face with sabers. Or with just one leg or arm. I see so many cripples coming home. I wish we could have war without shooting or cutting. When we get through all the nice young men will be on crutches. What then? Some one has to be licked. And the other side'll need the young men to build up with again. Why, we won't have anything when it's done and will have to begin right on the ground—after everything's shot and burned up. No one but me ain't looking ahead, I expect. Look at us. It was hard enough getting a living out of the old farm before. What do you think it's going to be afterward? And, then, Mr. Officer, though I ain't as pretty as my sons, they wouldn't let me go alone—though I'm willing if that'll keep them all in one piece. You see—I suppose you suspect it, anyhow—we ain't no fighters, and we hate to hurt and kill things—and to be

apart. If one's goes we'll all have to go. And, maybe, we couldn't all get in the same company. So, who'd take care of my boys if they got sick? And how'd they take care of me? I expect, if it gets much worse—some'll have to—"

"It must get worse before it can get better," said the officer. "And when that time comes you must take your place in the ranks, or prove your loyalty otherwise. But, for the present you are, probably, more useful here. We expect the arrest of Mallory now, no matter who he may be. Be sure to tell no one of your office."

"Not even Dave and Jon?"

"No one," says the officer. "Especially Dave and Jon. And by the way, has Betsy any pies on hand?"

He forgets and laughs and opens his haversack.

"Oh, so!" says I. "You were never here before! I just wonder who told you about the pies—and Betsy! Ha ha!"

But I didn't exactly get him. One of his men nudged him and whispers.

"My dear man," he laughs, "Betsy and her pies are known all through the Union army!"

"I thought I had you," says I, "but you got me—and you shall have the pies for being smarter than me and slinging such a fine compliment at Betsy."

Well, he got the pies—and dropped some papers out of his bag as he opened it for Betsy to put them in. I picks 'em up and yells after him, but he is out of sight, laughing, and in dust and noise, before I can think.

I put the papers in my pocket, thinking that they would soon be back again and I'd give 'em to him.

XV.

WHAT WAS THE TAPESTRY OF PENELOPE?

I HIDES my carbine, and has some heavy thoughts before they all come home. I had gone too far. I was scared of myself. But it was always so when they got me talking Union and rebel. I had sworn to arrest a spy! And if he resisted, to fire on him! It made me shiver. I wished I hadn't done it. But, I believe that if I hadn't, they'd have taken me along. And think of the children coming home and finding me gone! And after being taken away—I'd never get a chance to let them know about it. I had heard that when you got taken to Fort Warren or Fortress Monroe, you were buried. Besides, I had promised that I wouldn't tell any one. Now, look at that! I'd never had a secret from the boys!

Evelyn came first. And she had a big bun-

dle which she hadn't taken away when she went to town.

"What is it?" asks I.

"Daddy," she laughs, kind of excited and hysterical, "if you think back, you'll remember that I hadn't many clothes when I came, and I haven't got many since. Don't you think a girl's clothes—especially certain flimsy ones—wear out?"

"Of course," says I, "of course. It's a shame! I never thought of clothes for you. I'm so unused to women."

"Don't bother, daddy," she says, as affectionate, "I got some right here—when they're once made!"

She cried about it. I couldn't understand that! A girl crying about new clothes!

"You got to make 'em all? I'll get Sis Lowry to do it for you. She needs the money, anyhow."

"No! I must make them myself!" says Evelyn.

Well, I thought it was funny, that the tired

sad look came into her eyes when she said that, instead of the crazy-with-joy look a girl would have about making her own pretty clothes. It came often now!

"I suppose no one can see them," I laughs, "when they're done?"

"Daddy!" she says. "No you will never see them!"

And again the sick look came in her eyes.

"And, I shall be secret—with my door locked, while I'm working on 'em. You won't mind, will you, for a little while?"

"No," I says, "but the boys?"

"Ah, the boys!" she says, suddenly turning away and choking. "I'm tired—awful tired. I'll go straight to my room."

I went with her as far as the stair-steps. There she stopped, a couple of steps up, and says, so pitiful that I felt like comforting her:

"Daddy, did your passions ever lead you where you oughtn't to go? Where it's death?"

"I don't know what you mean," says I.

"Suppose that when you were very angry—

say at me—you unconsciously betrayed me to enemies—or fixed it so that some brute would come and beat me, put me in prison, kill me, and then, when you repented and loved me again, and tried to get the brute to stop coming to beat and kill me, you couldn't! You had gone too far—told too much—brought the danger too near!"

"Again!" says I. "You are talking in parables. I never read 'em, because I do not understand 'em. The Psalmist might as well have made a translation for fellers like me—if he wanted us to know what he was talking about. What's the English of it, Evelyn?"

"—And you had to keep on doing things to please the brute—even letting him take *you* to keep him from taking me!"

"Me?" says I. "I'd shoot the brute and be done with it! I wouldn't stand no such hell! Not for a minute!"

"But if he were so big and impervious that you couldn't injure him—just shoot and shoot and shoot and be laughed at—while he, with

one twist of his thumb and finger, could take the head off of me you love—"

She sighs and is silent for a while.

"—or off of you—or Jon—"

Another and worse sigh, and more silence.

"—or Dave—whom I love!"

"Come back," says I, "and fetch the dictionary with you!"

But she just goes on—holding hard to the side of the stair, drooping her nice head, as if it was about all she could bear.

"Wi— wouldn't you keep on trying to please the brute—even though you suffered—oh, suffered hell itself—died—so as to keep him from me? I mean from you-all?"

"I don't understand, dear," says I, as kind as possible—for I never saw her so worked up. "But if it's trouble, let your old daddy—yes, and Jon and Dave, too, help you!"

"And suppose," she goes on, "that was just the hell of it, as you said—that you couldn't—daren't—call on them to help you—the, the only ones who would! Suppose that merely

calling on them would ruin them. Suppose that you had to do it all alone—and that you were only a girl, after all, like me!"

"Evelyn," says I again, "I don't understand. You got to speak plain. If you are in trouble—or any of your friends—you got two brave boys to fight for you—and another old man that'll do his best to hurt any one who hurts you!"

"Ah, daddy, daddy, daddy, how well I know that! And how bitter that makes it!"

"I expect it's about your being a rebel, ain't it?" asks I.

She nods.

"Well, how often must I say not to bother about that—that we don't care *how* rebel you are? You shan't be hurt for it! We'll see to that!"

She cries and leans her nice head down on me.

"Oh, if you only could—if you only could, daddy, daddy, darling! Ah, you are the only ones who can't. Daddy, if they kill me—will

you see that I am decently interred and not thrown on the dunghill as I deserve to be? I love you-all now more than—that other thing —I used to love when the devil was awake. Daddy, whatever happens, don't you, for God's sake, desert me! Stay with me and give me another chance!"

"I wish you'd tell me exactly what's up," says I, "though I expect an old fool like me wouldn't understand a nice young girl's thoughts."

"Daddy," she asks, "did you ever hear the story of Penelope?"

"I never was acquainted with her. I suppose she lives in Hartford County, not?" answers I.

"She lived in Greece—"

"The country in the geography," I says, "not the Shnitzlers' place?"

"Yes. She was the wife of a great soldier named Ulysses. And while he was off in the wars many other chiefs came and wanted her, and they all brought their weapons, and all thought him dead. For men didn't woo women

in those days; they took them. But, scared though she was, she kept them all at bay, playing one against the other by promising to choose one of them as soon as a tapestry she was weaving for her husband's shroud was finished. But, at night, she ripped out what she had woven by day, so that it took a long time —and then Ulysses, who had not been killed, returned, as she had hoped and prayed he would, and all ended happily for her."

"Well," I says, "that's a nice story. But what's the answer?"

"I am Penelope, daddy, dear," she says, "and this is the tapestry."

She holds up the bundle she'd brought home.

"I've got a grudging permission to weave my own shroud, because there's none ready made about here, for—"

She sighs hard and long.

"And I am going to make it last long, long, long, hoping and praying that before it is done my Ulysses may return and save me, and make a happy ending."

Then she suddenly takes another tack.

"Daddy, sometimes I hear that the war can't last long any more. What do you think?"

"Well," I says, not very cheerful, "it's my opinion, that the war'll last as long as the South has anything to fight with. Gosh! Sometimes I almost wish 'em success—they are such grand fellows. No matter how many we kill there's always others a-coming. No matter how little they got to eat and wear, nor how little ammunition they got, they fight! Yes—as long as they can fight this war'll keep on."

She gives a long moan.

"What," I says, "you don't mean it?"

"Oh, daddy," she says, "if that is the only way to stop it, let us pray, as I do, that my people may soon—oh, very soon—have nothing left to fight with—men or guns or food!"

Think of that, will you, from such a rebel as Evelyn!

"Evelyn," says I, "that is serious from a rebel like you. Are you sick? Why is it? Stand fast by your colors!"

"I can't," she says. "It's not in here any more!" She pounds her breast. "Something else has taken its place. Yes, I am a brute. But, I suppose, if I could, I'd sacrifice the whole South—for—that one other thing. But," she laughs a little, "maybe I can keep my tapestry from being finished till the war's over. That's my only hope."

"Oh," I says, "then that's the trouble! You're bothering because we've changed your mind for you! You can't be rebel any more and you think you oughtn't be Union! Say, Evelyn, that makes me laugh, it does, really. Of course, we're glad you're Union. But, if you ain't sure about it, why, keep on being rebel. We'll all love you just as hard. What's the odds—for a woman? And, if you can't do either the one or the other, which, I expect, is your trouble, just forget it and be happy. It's hereditary: that's why I'm Union. And it'll work itself out all right. Do you hear? Just be happy. That's what'll please us most."

Goshens! When I looks up the turn of the

stair, where she had been, she's not there. I don't think she heard a word of that nice stuff of mine! I didn't like that.

Jon and Dave came a little later, as happy as a pair of June bugs, Dave, really on Jon's back, with a string of fish as long as your arm. What do you think of that! Dave on Jon's back! I wonder how far Jon'd carried him? Why, Dave had caught up and was as big as Jon now!

Of course, the first thing they asked for was Evelyn, and I told them about her being in town and the new clothes. But not about the soldiers nor Penelope.

"Now, I expect," whines Dave, "we'll see her about once a week—all on account of clothes."

"Davy," says I, "a woman and clothes means the same thing."

But Dave, he sings up to her window:

"'Oh, tell me where my Eva's gone!'"

And Evelyn throws open the window and

flings a kiss and laughs, happy as blazes. All changed the minute Dave comes! She has sewing things in her mouth and hands, and, as she waves, something drops out of her hand into the tall grass. We all tries to find it but it is no good, and she laughs, kind of excited, and says:

"Only an empty spool, boys. Don't bother," and we didn't—no more.

XVI

EVELYN'S SPOOL

I DIDN'T want to take the responsibility of watching for that spy, and, maybe, shooting him, myself, so I thought I had better work Jon into it with me, somehow, no matter if I had promised not to tell him. They had no business to ask such a thing.

"Jon," I says, "things are getting so bad around here that we got to arm and look out for the place. When they get to cutting down trees and breaking windows so they can look in it's about time."

"Yes," nods old Jon, "I've been thinking about that myself."

"Then Evelyn turning Union—"

"What!" says he, like an explosion, "what's that?"

"Evelyn's turned Union."

"Who told you?"

"She."

"Yes," says Jon, "that makes her doubly precious."

Well, I didn't mean that.

"Why?" asks I. "No one cares whether she's Union or rebel. No one but us knows what she is. I don't suppose *that* makes her any more precious, does it, Jonthy?"

"Yes, it does, daddy," says Jon. "She's nearer to us all! What did *you* mean, daddy?"

"Well," I says, "I kind of thought that having a rebel in the house would keep us on good terms with the Confederates, and keeping loyal ourselves would keep us straight with the Unions. There wasn't much sense in it, because no one knows of her sentiments. Just a kind of a brauch. But I felt that way."

"I suppose it is the very worst way to feel," laughs Jon. "You know what always happens to people who carry water on both shoulders! I don't think that that has had the least thing to do with keeping the secessionists from both-

ering us. For, as you say, none of them know her politics."

"Anyhow," I goes on, "she'd better stop her long walks alone—and going to town so often."

"Daddy," answers Jon, "who do you think would harm a woman—a girl, in fact!"

"Well," I adds, "I don't want to scare you. But what happened to Annie Shuster—"

"That's so," nods Jon, "that's so, daddy!"

Annie was on an errand to Crider's and some Union soldiers took her for a suspect they had been watching—trying to escape in woman's clothes. I hate to say what they done to her. But they treated her like she was a man. Anyhow, she looked a good deal like a man. That made Jon change his mind.

"Yes," he says. "There's hardly any possibility of Evelyn being taken for a man, she's too feminine. But, yes, we'd better look out a little more. There's no use in taking chances. We'll watch—you and me—night and night. I'll fix up the old flint-lock. It will hold a pint of buckshot."

I was mighty glad for Jon to tumble in like that, thinking it all his own plan.

"Yes," I says. "I'll go to town and get a carbine."

I thought, in that way, to account for the one I had.

Jon kept on planning while we walks toward the kitchen. When we got near, Evelyn poked her head out from the stairway, with a candle in her hand, like she expected to find us all there. But, when she halted and saw that no one was there but Dave, asleep, a cunning kind of look came on her face and she, quick, blew out the candle. In a minute we saw her come out the door on tiptoes and watch about for us. Then she hurried to that place where the spool had dropped and hunted for it in the grass. Some one came along the road. Maybe she thought it was us. She runs on her tiptoes back and through the kitchen, up to her room.

"Jon," I asks, "what do you make of that?"

"She needed her spool," says Jon.

"It was empty," says I.

"Well," laughs Jon, "can't you imagine some use for an empty spool?"

"Not since you made dog-wagons with them," says I, "and, anyhow, there are dozens of them right where she came from."

"But not one of them the right size, I suppose, just as I used to find out when I made the aforesaid dog-wagons of at least three different sizes of spools, sometimes four."

XVII

C. S. A.

SO Jonathan fixed the old flint that she'd go off the first time instead of the tenth, and loaded her with about a pint of buckshot, and one night Jon he watched, the next I did. And the funny thing about it was that no one else in the house knew a thing about it. Except they pestered me about being so sleepy.

Once in a while I came near ending the life of one of the neighbors, but they always took me for what I took them, suspicious, and made sufficient explanations. We use' to pull our hats down so's no one would know us, and talk in a changed voice. Even wore handkerchiefs over the lower part of our faces.

We would go to bed in the usual way, then the one who was to stand watch would sneak up. That was the hard part of it—getting up

after going to bed and fooling the sleep with the notion that it was all fixed till morning. Mostly, Jon had to wake me, or there would have been no watch. And often I have to admit Jon was good to me and watched two nights in succession—when he came and heard me snoring so in earnest. I admit I have a big snore.

I had never been about much at night. And snooping now in the light of the moon made honest things look queer, and made me acquainted with many queer things which had looked honest.

The way the lights used to perform in Ben Crider's garret window was a caution. Sometimes it was a regular dance. And there were whistles and horns blowing now and then, and all sorts of creepy shadows and things, and rapid riders.

The fact of the matter is, though I don't like to admit it, I was afraid to be out alone at night. It got me so nervous that I was ready to fire at the bunnies I wakened out of their

naps. And if I trod on a twig and it broke, I flew around with my carbine cocked, ready to murder the twig. I began to wish the watching was done with. But these very things showed us the necessity for it.

But the worst of it was that I discovered —and Jon, too, for that matter—that we weren't the only ones out at night with guns, watching. There was a regular ring about the place we couldn't break through. Every now and then some one would challenge us and turn us back. I don't know whether or not they knew us, but we never knew them, and they didn't seem like neighbors. Jon says they know us and are keeping us under watch. He says that one night some one pulled his hat up to see who he was, and seemed disappointed.

"Of course, they all know you, daddy," he laughs.

"Why so?" asks I.

"Because of your language," laughs he again.

"But I never talk."

"Yes," he says, "you talk to yourself."

"Only when there's nobody about," says I.

"Only when you *think* there's nobody about," laughs Jon. "But, if you want to make sure of that, you got to search all the bushes and things which might hide a man laying down, or up in a tree, within twenty yards of you."

"Now, you don't tell me it's as bad as that, Jonthy?" I says.

Then Jon took the back track—thinking he'd scared me.

"No, no! All we got to do is to be straight Union—as we are—all of us!"

"Jonthy," says I, though, "it's a creepy business—watching and being watched like this. Is there anything to stop it?"

Jon hesitates a little, then he says, as if he didn't like to:

"Yes, daddy—enlisting."

"Then, according to that, you don't think it's our neighbors we meet—doing just as we are doing?"

Jonathan hesitates a minute, then he says:

"Yes, yes, daddy, of course. That's all it is. Forget it—and be careful."

Evelyn cried a good deal now, and lost her color. But how she did love Dave! When they met she would just fly at him! And she'd tell him that it would soon be over now—soon be over. Only, instead of feeling almost like a bride, she'd always burst into tears when she said that. At last Jon figured it all out on a grand scale. Dave and Evelyn were both fooling us. What was going on was preparations for a wedding. Evelyn was making her own trousseau.

"Then, some day, all of a sudden, we'll be up against a wedding and the joke will be expected to be on you and me. Be ready to laugh."

"Jon," says I, touching his head, "some one's getting queer. Is it you?"

"Well, daddy," laughs he, happier than any of them about that wedding, "do you expect a girl to work day after day on her trousseau without tears?"

"Of joy, I expect," says I, for a joke.

"For joy," nods Jon, serious. "Why, daddy, a young girl's wedding is the most wonderful thing in her whole life!"

"Mine wasn't. But I suppose you're thinking about the time you were a young girl. And how many times you were married!" says I, for another joke on Jon.

But he laughs and understands, this time, and hugs me so that I thought my ribs were cracked.

"You see, daddy," Jon goes on, "I have known this for a long time, and if you'll come with me I'll show you and prove my faith in my own prophecy."

He drags me behind the barn, where he has a nice little hotbed with some funny flowers in it.

"Well, that's nice and unexpected," says I, "but go on and prove it. These are flowers; that's a wedding. What's the answer? Please tell me."

"There's the answer," laughs old Jon.

"Those orchids. They're some of the frailest and rarest flowers in the world and I am raising them for Evelyn's wedding! Orchids. Nothing less would be appropriate. You're not to tell. If they think they are going to surprise us, this will tell them that they haven't succeeded."

We stood there a minute, and the smile faded from old Jonthy's face. Maybe he was thinking of the time before Dave came home.

"Jonthy," says I, "it would be a sin not to believe it. I'll try. Also I'll remember the name: orchids."

And I takes him away from there.

On my watch one night I saw Evelyn about midnight open the window for air. I could see her holding up some sort of garment with gold braid on it. I snooped as near as I could to try and see what it was and then have fun with her about it. No use. But, as I went on my toes, I struck something with my foot and picked it up. It was a brass button. I put it into my pocket.

I had forgotten about it the next day, and pulls it out accidental when Jon and me is together.

"Why, daddy, where did you get that?" yells Jon, taking it from me. "No wonder we're under suspicion!"

It was a brass button with C. S. A. stamped on it.

"Well," says I, "there have been plenty of Confederate soldiers at about the place where I found it, more than once."

"Or," says Jon, "some Union soldier may have sewed it on his coat in place of one with U. S. A. on it. Or, one of them might even have been wearing a Confederate coat. They do such things."

I was looking at it then.

"It's bran' new, Jonthy," says I.

"No," says Jonathan, "not new."

"That's rust—from the wet grass."

"Well," laughs Jonathan, "Old Suspicious, what's the answer?"

"You don't think Evelyn might have

dropped it—thrown it away? It was about the time she turned Union. Or, maybe—That's not the 'spool'?"

"No," laughs Jon.

But, then, as usual, it came to him.

"Why, yes, she might have dropped it, poor girl! It may be a souvenir—possibly, only think, daddy, cut from her 'father's coat', and sent to her. She might have thrown it away so as not to hurt our feelings—and be loyal to us!—then repented. Think what a sacrifice! For us and the Union! Of course, she'd be shy of letting us know about repenting the sacrifice, but that doesn't lessen its greatness. And that would explain the other night. Shall we give it to her?"

"Sure!" says I, handing it out to him.

Then, again, after a while, it came right.

"No. Then she'd know we knew her dear little secret. To-night I'll put it back where it was—but so plain in sight she can't miss it. Maybe she's still hunting for it. To-night's my watch."

And nice old Jon told me the next day that she had come down in her nightie and looked for it, and had found it.

"Poor little girl! She was so happy! I'm glad she didn't know we knew. She cried. Her very heart seemed broken."

"But why should her heart seem broke?" I asks.

Well—Jon didn't know.

XVIII

WHAT IS GREATER THAN PATRIOTISM?

JON and me were sitting on the front porch there, in our shirt-sleeves, one night, and Dave and Evelyn were out under the plum trees yonder, when the brass cornet band came along playing, "We Are Coming, Father Abraham, Three Hundred Thousand Strong." And there was a procession, with a banner telling that there was to be a meeting in town that night to raise a company of Union soldiers.

After the band had passed we sat still a long time. Jon was looking straight ahead and we could hear the voices of Dave and Evelyn. Mostly it was only the murmuring of two people in love. But now and then Dave's laugh would break out, and then Evelyn's—different, nicer—would join. At last we could hear Dave singing that:

"Du hast das Herze mein,
So ganz genommen ein—"

After a while Evelyn joined, like she was saying the same thing. Jon turned and looked that way, just once. It was the same song he had sung to her—but different. Dave made it gay. And Evelyn was joining in. I saw his face. He was trying to smile at their happiness, but his own suffering came through—and there it was: joy and sorrow in one smile. And on such a face as Jon's—which told everything!

Said I, to take him away from it:

"Now the coal-oil torches those boys carried for the band has spoiled the air. Suppose we go in, Jonthy?"

But Jon didn't move. I think he didn't hear me. Finally he said:

"They were right!"

"Who," says I, "who was right?"

"The Union soldiers. Everybody but us. One of us ought to go. One of us must. Then the others won't have to. It's hard, but necessary. There's not a family in Maryland with

three men left in it. No wonder they suspect us. I don't see how we've escaped the draft."

"Not on your life!" says I, very savage. "I want my boys in one piece and all together in the same place—in case of fire in the chimley. You know I couldn't put it out myself, because it's hard enough, sometimes, for all of us. And just think of Betsy as a fireman!"

"And," says Jon, never noticing how funny that was, "the right one has got to go."

"Who do you think is the right one?" asks I.

"I am," nods Jon.

Well, when Jon decided to do a thing, there was no use trying to stop him. The best was to go along and persuade him.

He got up and put on his coat.

"Well," I says, to humor him, "suppose we go and see what fools they make of themselves, enlisting to get shot. That's one way to not get a Union company up. Why don't they come around with a secret subscription paper! Nobody's going to enlist in a Union company right out in public."

"Come, then," says Jon, hurrying me, as if he had decided it and a load was off his mind.

"All right," says I. "If we can't enlist ourselves, we can whoop it up so's maybe the other fellows'll go. But you can't raise no whole Union company round here for a million dollars."

"Yes, that's necessary, too," says Jon. "Our presence there will do good. Come!"

"But I'll be on hand to discourage *you*—yes, and lam you, if it goes too far."

"Daddy," smiles Jon, "it will go as far as the front! You don't know the news about here. There's been a change."

"Shall we take the guns?" says I.

"No," says Jon, "we'll only make trouble with 'em and be tempted to shoot. The time is not yet—to shoot."

But we hadn't gone far before a man with a gun steps out in the road and says:

"Halt, Lucas Mallory!"

"There," says I to Jon, "it's war already; that's what comes of not taking our guns along. I could get him easy while he's bothering you."

Jon kind of laughs and points to another man with a gun who was coming to join the first one.

"Neither of us knows Lucas Mallory," says Jon, polite as a dancing master, instead of fighty, like me, "nor is either of us he. I am Mr. Jonathan Vonner. This is my father, Stephen Vonner. Now, may we pass?"

"Oh!" they says, disappointed, looking close. "Wrong one."

"Where are you going?" asks the first one. "And where's your other *reputed* son?"

"You're further than usual from home tonight," says the second one, "in a southerly direction."

"None of your business," says I, still fighty. "I've lived here since seventeen-ten—and my ancestors, I'm not that old myself alone—and I don't think I'll ask anybody when I want to go away from my house a little, north, east, south or west, or prove that my sons are my sons. None of your business."

"Yes, daddy," says Jon, in that polite way, "it is some of their business. These men are

here for our protection. If you will look closely you will see that they are in the uniform of the United States."

Well, that was so. And they seemed a little less fighty at Jon's great politeness. So I let him do the talking.

"We are going to town to enlist in the Union army," Jon goes on, with the oil all ready for the water, "and my brother Dave is at home. That accounts for all of us."

Well, that flabbergasts 'em still more.

"I should say that one of us is going to enlist," Goliath amends.

"Which one?" asks the first soldier.

"I," answers Jon. "There's a meeting in Excelsior to-night to organize a Union company."

Well, Jon's answers got 'em so that they didn't know what to do. They whispered together a little, then one of 'em says:

"On your word of honor, is that your errand?"

"On my word or honor," says Jon, holding up his right hand.

"We'll know if you *don't* enlist," says the other soldier.

"Certainly," says Jon.

"However," asks the second one, "your supposed brother Dave doesn't intend to enlist?"

"No," says Jon.

"Why?" asks the soldier.

Jon smiles and says:

"He's got better and more important business on hand."

"Oh!" says one. "He's at home *now?*"

"Pass," says the other. "Enough."

I heard one say to the other as we went on:

"We ought to know which of the three it is now!"

"Yes," says the other one.

"It must be a secret from these two. They're all right."

"Now, what do you think *that* means, Jonthy?" says I.

"That the sooner one of us enlists the better. That will take all this watching and threatening and suspicion away. Some of our kind secessionist neighbors are giving us entirely too much attention. And I suppose many things we do innocently add confirmation. Even the night-watching, for purely honest reasons, has probably been the worst thing we could have done. The Union pickets take it for something entirely different. And something disloyal, no doubt—such as protecting the work of the Knights and sympathizers.

As we passed old Jake Kimmelwasser's house, he was sitting on the porch all dressed up in the uniform he had worn in Mexico. He had got a wound in the head at Chapultepec and was crazy. Every time they raised a new company, Union or Confederate, he enlisted—and then went home to bed and forgot it. Now he came running out, and, like we—Jon and me—was a whole regiment, he drilled us clear into the town—making us march and countermarch, wheel and oblique—till he fell

backward in some mud and had to stop and clean his uniform—of which he was mighty proud.

To me it was foolish. I got mad. But to Jon it was a great lesson. He obeyed every order.

Says he:

"There is a crazy man. And what is it survives in him? Not love, not the recollection of his wife, his children; only the vast patriotism of that day is left. We have laughed because he enlists always. But he might laugh, if he knew, because we never enlist."

"Off in the clouds, Jonthy," says I. "I'm on the earth. Come back. Be merciful to me, a sinner."

"Ah, daddy," laughs Jon, "I am learning something! This enlisting brings it out."

"What? Quick—before it gets away!"

"That there is something greater even than love."

"Well, well! Who'd have thought it? And from sentimental Jon! But I'm glad to hear

it. Now, I can sleep of nights once more. What is it?"

"Patriotism!" say Jon.

"Jonthy, it smells like whisky," says I, "when you get among it. You'll see when we reach town."

But after I thought of it, I was glad that Jon had found something to take the place of love—even if he only imagined it.

XIX

WHAT JONATHAN FOUND TO TAKE HER PLACE

THE whole little town was in the Square, and were as crazy as old Jake. But it wasn't, like his, that they all wanted to fight the rebels. It was just the other way. For the boys had been coming home in rough pine boxes mighty fast of late. They wanted to fight—but not the rebels. Something safer. There was a good deal of bad whisky about just as I told Jon—and more hard talk. A few was for "On to Richmond"—for the others. Some was for shooting Burnside. Others was just crazy to tell what they would do if they was Lincoln or Davis. But I didn't hear a soul who was crazy to enlist. A couple of houses were illuminated to show that they were Union. And it was strange that these were houses where the Union flag in the window was tied

with crêpe. Jon said it was mighty brave to do it. Anyhow, the windows was broke in these houses. But most of the dwellings were dark. There were two little newspapers printed in the town, one Union, and one Democrat. The Union office had about a hundred tallow candles burning in the windows.—"Just for spite"—as a card in the window said. And there was a large placard in front with this on it:

WE *ARE* COMING FATHER
ABRAHAM!—
NOT QUITE 300,000 MORE—
BUT 100 MORE—
AND RIGHT OUT OF DARKEST
EGYPT!

At "Egypt" there was a hand pointing to the Democrat office.

That was dark, and had some of its windows broken, too, while the mischievous boys in the procession poked their torches through the broken panes and tried to set the place afire. Other rowdy boys were trying to stop them,

till the men took part; and at last a crowd with guns and scythes and pitchforks marched down the street and took charge as vigilantes, and said the meeting should go on. And in peace. It was a case of fair play. And so it did.

You could see that the sentiments was changing. It wouldn't have been possible to hold that meeting a little while before. It wasn't easy now. Any one, no matter who, that hung out a Union flag would have been mobbed. And there was no vigilantes then to see fair play. There was only one kind of fair play a little while ago.

In the middle of the Square, Kratz, the editor of the Union paper, got on a box and made a speech:

"Enough men," says he, "has gone out of this neighborhood to make a regiment. But the most of them have gone the wrong way. And there are many more who would go that way if they weren't afraid of powder and lead. That's all that keeps them here eating us up who have hardly enough for ourselves. I'd

rather see 'em go. Aren't we drinking parched rye for coffee—and only a little of that? Don't we pay a dollar a pound for musty flour? And glad to get it—when we have the dollar. And it takes two of them now to make one. No one is working, all are fighting. But the secessionists are gone, to jail or elsewhere—thanks to Ben Butler—and this is a Union and not a rebel place now."

He yells that so hard that the houses rattled. And, Lord, what yells answered him! And the names they called him! But the old boys with the pitchforks turned their backs to the editor, and their forks and scythes to the crowd, and, maybe, it was correct that they were cowards—as Kratz called 'em—them outside the scythes. For they said they would tear his insides out—but no one came to do it. The editor is game and yells it at 'em again:

"This is a Union town and not a rebel town, now, I say. And I have just proved it. Out there, the further away the better for them, they have threatened to kill me. Well, does

any one come to do it? There's rebellion for you! Wind!

"I thought the government had got all the traitors. There's a few left. But don't you worry out there! I see you. Your names will be in my paper to-morrow. And that'll go straight to Washington. By God, I'm going to see that what I just said is true. That this is a Union town now. Don't worry out there! I expect the government has missed a few of you. But I know who you are, and if Uncle Sam don't get every sympathizer and Knight, and secessionist and Copperhead and spy in this county, you can blame it on me! Yes, and take it out of me—if you dare!

"Why, you are the scum of the rebellion. I respect those secessionists among us, who, thinking they were right, went into the Southern armies to prove it. I say so in my paper. I have nothing against the rebel who fights and takes his chances with powder and lead. He's a man! But such left-overs as you—stragglers—hangers-on—whose only weapon is their

mouth—spying and lying—taking no risk yourselves—eating our substance and then bringing the provost guard down on us—by the Lord, if I were Lincoln, I'd hang every one of you on sight—as he is entitled to do with spies. And, if I can bring it about, that's what's going to happen to you—and mighty soon! My advice to you is to go into the rebel army to save your lives! Though it's full of gentlemen—the rebel army—and God knows what they'd do with such as you! You'd be out of your class."

Well, I don't know if Kratz was fooling or not. But he certainly scared 'em some, like I never knowed 'em to be scared before. They didn't make so much noise after that nor show themselves so much; and some of 'em sneaked away. He had a much better chance to make his speech.

"What I was going to say, fellow citizens, was that though this is a Union and not a rebel place, and though we have about a hundred men in the Union army, they have gone to the

front and enlisted as individuals because we have been afraid to come out with our colors and organize a full company. Fellow citizens, we have not had the honor of sending to the front a company like other towns, carrying our own flag, wearing the uniforms we have put on them, carrying the muskets we have placed in their hands, bearing into the fight *our name!* And this has hurt me, it hurts you, it hurts our dear little town. Don't you suppose that that man down at Washington, bearing our sorrows, has looked at the map, has seen our name, has wondered whether we have sent him a company, has been told that we have not? And what other town on the map tells him such a tale? Boys, boys, do you want this war fought out without having helped? If you can stand it I can't. I'm going to let you get your news from there, such as it is—"

He turned and pointed to the Democrat office.

"—and I am going to fight. But, for the honor and glory of our town, I want to go with

a hundred of my neighbors. I want to march straight to the White House door, draw up before it and say to the President: 'Father Abraham, we have redeemed ourselves! Here, when the cause is at its lowest, when the outlook is darkest, when even patriots are saying that your war is a failure, we come to tell you that it is not. We come to cheer you, to hold up your tired hands and say, On, yes, by the Lord God! on to Richmond! One more grand effort and it is done! There are still a million soldiers, like us, waiting for precisely this moment, which comes in every struggle—the moment when the contest wavers! Call them; they will come as we have come without calling. We have sent you our money, we have sent you our grain and pork and lead and powder and cloth; but now we send you one hundred *men*. And from Maryland!' "

Well, there was a thrill abroad, at last. The calling of names and the fighting had stopped and it was serious.

The editor pulled a sheet of paper out of

his pocket and wrote his name with a splendid dash.

"There's my name—about the middle of the sheet—as evidence of my sincerity. I leave my business, my wife, my babies, in poverty. I have got to go. There is something inside that compels me. Now, who'll be the second man of one hundred to put his name down with mine?"

No one answered.

"Who wants to stand beside me and see the glory on that worn old face in the White House, when we stand at parade before him? Who wants to feel the grasp of that big honest hand? I wouldn't miss it for a mint. I want to hear him call us his children. I want to call him by that simple, homely, but glorious name, Father Abraham. I want my babies to know it all. And then, by the God above us, I want to go out and fight for him—die for him—if it must be. Oh, yes! I know. I see, as well as you, the lead-lined boxes at the station. I know! But you know how we bury

them. To the *Dead March.* With flags and flowers and troops of children, sobbing, sobbing. You know that not one who had died here in his bed would be so remembered. But you know, too, that all those who come back that way are our heroes—immortal;—yes, even when they come in gray! And you know that there is nothing on earth that will ever make you forget them. Tell me, each one of you, if you had to choose a form of death, wouldn't you choose that? Well, some day you must choose death. Come with me and choose one that is sweet and glorious beyond words!"

Still no one said a word.

"Of course it goes hard in a place where the Union element has been afraid, so far, to show its face. I appreciate that it is going to take courage for any man to walk up here and be spotted by the spies and informers, with the chance of some Knight assassinating him by command of the order. But, I tell you, the times have changed. We have settled down. We have thought. We have had war enough to

know what it is. We didn't at first. It was a grand spree! A holiday parade! It didn't matter so much when some one else was doing the fighting, and we were comfortable at home. But the war is at our doors now, and bare living has grown so hard that something must happen—and soon. And, now, right now, boys, is the time to make it happen—before the country is destroyed. And you can do it—you! Come! Don't you want to?"

Again Kratz waits, but not a word. He looks all about to catch an eye. But all look away.

"The man who puts his name down next," says the editor, "will be an officer. He may have the captaincy. I don't want it. My God! Don't that move some one? Don't you all want to be captain or lieutenant?"

No one seemed to want to be an officer—though soldier companies was about half officers until they got to the front.

"Good God! Is it possible!" says Kratz, wiping the tears out of his eyes. "I have

lived among you all my life. I was born here. And you are going to send me out alone. You are going to let me say to Father Abraham—'Father, I come alone. They were tried and found wanting! There were more than two thousand strong men listening to me as I told them how badly you needed only one hundred of them in this the darkest hour of your war. Yet, out of that host, not one was burning to write his name upon his country's roll of glory!' "

All stood mute.

"'Not one was ready to die that his country might live undivided. All were willing that those who have already died in this great cause, shall have died in vain. All were willing that the glorious fruits of victory, just within our grasp, for a final great effort, shall be handed over to the enemy.' Come! I ask you for the last time, is there not one—but one!—who will put his name here with mine?"

It was quieter than ever while he waited, and he drooped his head and was turning away,

when Jon steps up quiet as a May morning, and says:

"I will."

And do you think that I could say a word? No. I was so worked up with the thoughts that editor had made me think, that if Jon hadn't spoken I would. Well, it was good to see that poor devil of an editor rise from despair to glory. He faced Jon about so the crowd could see him. He could hardly talk. He was crying like a baby.

"After all, friends," he choked out, "I'm glad you didn't hurry. Look at your second Union soldier—your first, in fact! Did you ever see a finer leader? Captain Vonner, I salute you! God bless you!

"And, oh, what an answer to calumny! Friends, he comes from the veriest hotbed of treason in Maryland. Up there, in the hills, a cordon of guards surrounds him; the provost guard is on the watch night and day. He, himself, has been named to me as a suspect. His family have been. Thank God, I knew it

for a lie. Now he stands here, by my side, to prove his Unionism with his life!"

Then he turns to Jon:

"If you and I must go alone, down there, to that sad man at Washington, representing our town, I am not ashamed. My great end is achieved. Give me your hand—both of them. And, I swear to you, that if no one else volunteers to-night, you and I will go alone! But I don't think we shall. I see, crowding up here, other young men like you—the hope and glory of our land. Come, come, come! Now they halt! They are at the Rubicon! A word will carry them over! Say a word to them—Captain Vonner—just a word!"

Well, by that time the red-headed son of a gun had got me and all the rest crazy! Yes, there was a bunch of fine young men all crowded together, and just waiting, right out in front, for another encouraging word!

"Captain Vonner, say a word!" yells Kratz, the craziest of all.

"Not captain," says Jon, determined. "That's why I didn't answer sooner."

"Captain Vonner," repeats the editor, "say a word—just a word! There are many of your young friends here. God help us, I should go to Washington mad with joy, in a company of such splendid young spirits. Could we do that, we should, indeed, have more than redeemed ourselves! Just a word, Captain Vonner!"

I know that the last thing on earth he could ask of Jon was a speech. He'd never made one in his life. He couldn't. But that just shows how little a father sometimes knows about his sons! Jon stepped upon the box, calm as calm and says:

"Friends, most of what you have heard is true. I, too, think now of that dark sad man at Washington, bearing the burdens of us all. I am going to help him. He is right. If any of you who know me can be influenced by me, I say, come with me!"

Such a little thing! But so powerful! I

didn't know my dear old Jonathan standing up there, tall, strong, white, half smiling, as if, at last, he had found a way through darkness. The multitude moved upon itself. I saw three boys I knew coming through the crowd. No fuss, just in earnest—just like Jonathan. But I was deathly afraid they'd get there before I could. So I yells out:

"Me next!"

The crowd parted and the editor grabbed me by the hands and dragged me to the box. He was crying more than ever.

"Oh, men of the Union!" he sobs out. "This is glorious! Another of the suspected family standing before you, proving his loyalty with his life! Oh, it swells my heart almost to bursting! I have heard him called a Knight—sympathizer—Copperhead. I have heard his house called the headquarters for the South—whence information and material go to the Confederates. Why, friends, maybe, if we only knew it, all this while, all about us, men like these have been under suspicion, yet only

waiting, yearning, to fight for the dear old flag! Lieutenant Vonner, with an overflowing heart, apologizing for my neighbors' doubts, I salute you!"

"Not lieutenant," I says. "I ain't fit. If I can't fight in the ranks I won't go—"

But no one heard me. By that time they were crowding in to sign, and the band struck up *The Star Spangled Banner* and played till the shingles came off the houses, they say.

Jon sneaked up to me and says:

"Daddy, I'm surprised at you. Who'll take care of Evelyn and Dave? You shouldn't have done it. Please withdraw. There is time. One of us is enough—under our circumstances."

"Jonthy," says I, "I don't know what withdraw means—" just in fun; I did know, of course—"and it was your fault. I wouldn't have done it for his speech. But yours—"

"I have a special purpose in going, daddy."

"No?" says I. "Patriotism?"

Well, anyhow, about that time, the editor came up and put his arms about us both.

"I hear something about withdrawing. You can do that, Mr. Vonner, without a bit of shame. With your son we feel that you have given enough. Thank God your enlistment has proved your loyalty. And I'll get my hundred now."

I just stood up and folded my arms:

"I am of age, twice," I says. "I do not withdraw. I go with my noble son—" just for fun. "And not to prove my loyalty."

The band played like mad, the boys started signing, and we started home.

"Well, you see how it went, Jonthy," says I. "You got me crazy, too. We'd have better stayed at home."

Jon shakes his head no.

"Daddy," says he, more to himself than to me, "the reason was that I had to find something to take her place here"—his heart—"I had to have something! There was such a void there! And it aches—daddy, it aches! Strange, though, that war should fill the place of love!"

"Well," says I, "that's what she does—mixes up war and love like thunder—does Evelyn."

"Yes, I couldn't understand that before. I do now. But why should you go?"

"I got an aching void myself," says I, "and I know where it come from."

"That is strange," says Jon.

"I suppose war's good for *all* aching voids," says I; "not?"

"Maybe," nods Jon, and said no more about my withdrawing. That aching void business settled him. He understood that I meant we weren't getting enough to eat—just in fun—of course. At least I hope so—and not that I was in love with some one warlike.

XX

MORE MYSTERY

ON the way home we meets the same two soldiers. They surrounded us, savage.

"You didn't enlist!" challenges the one. "You lied to us. You lied all around."

"On the contrary," smiles Jon, "we done better than we promised."

"How do you make that out?" says the savage one.

"We both enlisted instead of only one."

"You've got to prove it!" says the other one. "We won't believe you again."

"You'll find our names at the top of the list, you idiot," says I, "if you go to town and look. Prove it to yourselves—or go to the devil!"

"Yes, yes," said Jon, ready with the oil. "They know what to do, daddy." To them he says: "What my father said is true. But we are in your hands. What are your orders?"

"Back to town," says they.

On the way one of them says:

"Why did you tell us your brother was at home?"

I was going to speak, and tell 'em they was out under the trees where they couldn't be found easy, but Jon stops me.

"Were you there?" he asks.

They don't answer.

"He's gone away, hasn't he?" they asks instead.

"My question to you remains unanswered," says Jon, as fighty now as me. "I'll ask you another. What do you want with my brother Dave?"

"You're talking to a Union soldier!" says one of 'em.

"You're talking to a Union officer!" says Jon, more savage than I ever heard him speak. "And, I may as well tell you that if you lay a hand on my brother you and this Union officer will have it out together. Let me look at you!"

Before he can even think Jon has him by the throat and his gun in his hand, and jerks up his face so that I thought his head would fly off.

With some help from Jon I managed to get the other one.

"I'll know you hereafter!" says Jon. "Now march—out in front. We're going where you meant to take us. But it's not right for two officers to follow two privates. March!"

Well, I tell you, I'd have marched as straight as they did if Jon'd been about a foot behind me with a bayonet!

We marches 'em right back to Kratz.

"I wish to God I had the authority," says Kratz to them; "I'd shoot you right here. It's men like you who are making the most trouble on the border—just as you have made it for these men. I don't know whether or not these two Union officers have the right to arrest you while on duty. I suppose not. They're not mustered in yet. I wish they had. I'd keep you tight enough, with my hundred boys."

"We want to know," says they, "no matter who you or they are, whether they have enlisted."

"Yes, you fools," says Kratz, "and both are officers! You'll get your court-martial for this if I can accomplish it!"

They seem sort of flabbergasted when Kratz shows them our names on the paper—with captain after Jon's and lieutenant after mine.

"Now," says Kratz, "you'd better stop bothering these people! They command a hundred men. You are only two."

"Yes, *these,*" nods the soldier. "I suppose *they're* all right."

"And if they hadn't started it no one else would have come in. You've got to thank this young man for a hundred Union recruits out of this secessionist hole."

Then he puts his arms on both of our shoulders, and says:

"Gentlemen, under the circumstances, I feel that I ought to let you both withdraw. Only, in that case, I fear, we lose the whole company.

I see no reason why you should have any veneration for your country after this. It's discouraging, disheartening. Shall we drop the company?"

He gets the company roll to cross our names off if we like when Jon stops him—still very polite.

"No," he said, "these men are only doing their duty—foolishly though they do it. They have their orders—just as you and I will have, presently. Keep our names where we put them. Keep the company."

Well, the crowd that had gathered is floored by that.

"My God!" weeps the editor. "Such patriotism!"

The two soldiers seems ashamed, and one of them says:

"Gentlemen, you may go to your homes."

The other one says:

"If you need to pass our lines again, the countersign is Washington. There is our confidence in you both!"

Jon was silent for a long time afterward.

Finally I says:

"Well, Jonthy?"

"Daddy, I got to confess, at last, that I don't understand it."

"Some one has given us a mighty bad name with the Unions—Ben Crider, I suppose. Well, before I go I'll take a licking out of his hide."

But Jon shakes his head.

"I hardly think that would help us. We have done the one thing that will. No one can question, further, the Unionism of men who enlist. Anyhow, it seems to me that the trouble is deeper than Crider. However, there is no use in worrying Evelyn and Dave about it."

"Don't you think they smell a rat?" asks I.

"No," smiles nice old Jon, "not even a mouse!"

XXI

THE FRENZY OF EVELYN

EVELYN got as white as the wall when she heard it, and choked up and couldn't speak for a while. But, when speech came it made up for halting. She looks Jon straight in the eye, with the horrors in her face and voice, and says:

"Do you mean to say that *you* enlisted under Lincoln?"

Jon looks just as straight back at her.

"Yes," says he, soft and smiling.

"And you're proud—glad?"

"Yes," again from Jon. "Why not?"

"Why not? You bring down upon us destruction—destruction—destruction! Oh, the ruin, the ruin you have wrought this night!"

"Dear sister," says Jon, soft and fine. "I

hate to tell you, but we are under grievous suspicion. All about us, there is a cordon of Union soldiers. There is a spy named Mallory near us. He has somehow made the Federal authorities believe that one of us is Mallory. Don't you see how dangerous that is for all of us? And that the only way to divert suspicion is for some of us to enlist in the Union army?"

"And, do you think," shrieks Evelyn, "that that will make the Federal government believe that it has got rid of a Confederate spy?"

"No," says Jon. "It will find the spy in good time and shoot him. But it will convince the government that he is not here, not one of us; the horrible suspicions and surveillance of us will cease—and be carried on elsewhere."

She gets wilder and wilder.

"Isn't Dave here to shoulder the suspicion still? And if they think the spy is one of you three, don't you see that you have fastened it down on him alone? Dave, Dave! Before, it might have been any of you three. It was un-

certain, and that kept you-all safe, but with you two in the Union army it can only be Dave."

At first Jon seems scared by that. But then he smiles and says:

"Kushy—kushy! Why, Dave knows no more about war and spying than a baby. He hasn't been here. How *could* he be suspected? And every one is aware of that. There's only one thing he knows since he came home."

"What's that?" asks Evelyn, sharp and quick.

"To love you," says nice old Jon. "And don't you think that every one who sees or knows him sees and knows *that* too? A spy can not be in love or thinking of marriage."

But all the answer he gets to that is shrieking, that we have killed her, killed Dave, killed 'most everybody and thing on earth.

"Then," says Jon, soft and nice, "what do you think ought to be done to avert suspicion, if daddy and I have made a mistake?"

"Can't you see?" shrieks Evelyn. "Mallory must enlist—Mallory, Mallory, Mallory—in

the rebel army *now* to shield Dave. Mallory himself must be got rid of. And he must be known to have gone away. That is the only way now. The only way! That's how this night's work has turned the matter!"

"But," says Jon, "we don't know him—where to find him—who he is. He doesn't exist, as far as we know. Yet, they know he does. If he could be found—I'd kill him! And send them his body. He wouldn't have to enlist."

"He deserves that," says I, "a man that is too cowardly to shoulder his own deeds, but puts 'em on some one else! I wish, too, that I'd come across him with a gun in my hands!"

"Dear daddy," says Evelyn, more quiet now, and slow and solemn, "the time is at hand—you have brought it to-night—for you and your gun—and Mallory! Yes, you must kill him—that is the better way—better than enlisting in the rebel army. Death to Mallory!"

And she actually laughs.

"Daddy says," put in Jon, puzzled to death,

"that you are Union now. If you're Union why do you bother?"

"Do you suppose those *little* things could make me like this?" says Evelyn. "Union—rebel! What are *they* now? My God!"

"They use' to be a lot," kind of smiles Jon, and in a nice soft voice. "And, if it's so that you are still rebel—"

She flings up her hands and just goes on.

"It's Dave—Dave—Dave!"

Jon thinks she's gone crazy, and tries to quiet her, and Dave comes in singing:

" 'Dear Evelina,
Sweet Evelina
My love for you can never, never die—' "

This seemed to make her wilder yet.

She starts to run away.

"Jonthy," says I, "do you mind what she said we should do when the devil got her?"

Jon nods, kind of smiling.

"Well, here goes," says I, "Jonthy, follow her instructions. Come on!"

I drags both Jon and Dave up and forced their arms around her, and my own, yelling:

"Now hard—the harder the better!"

But that was different. She beat us in our faces till we were black and blue—and my nose was bleeding. Only—when she had struck Dave once he let go and turned his back. At last Jon and I let go, too, and she stood there among us, like a young devil. I was ready to run, and Jon was discouraged at the result of the embracing business. But Dave just turns and looks at her. She starts to say something not so wild and Dave thunders:

"Silence!"

And, after a moment:

"Apologize to daddy and Jon!"

But nothing happened. She couldn't, she was too choked.

Then Dave turned to us and said:

"Father—brother, since Evelyn will not apologize for herself, I do so for her. I am ashamed of her. I did not know she could be such a devil."

He looks at her like a judge, sentencing a man to be hanged.

"But she must and shall be punished for this sort of thing. Her punishment is—"

Dave turned to her then.

"—to be told, for the first time, that I am a Union man. And that nothing has helped so much to make me one as this madness of hers."

"Ah, what do I care about that!" says Evelyn.

"If you care about me you'll care about that—and not be entirely blinded by your own prejudices," says Dave.

"You, too! You, too! Why, that's all gone!"

"I have asked you," says Dave, in a way new and terrible, "to apologize to Jon and daddy. Be as much of a rebel as you like—but a lady. There's nothing else to be discussed till that has been done."

"But, Dave, my own dear Dave, you must see! Don't you-all see? I'm not rebel—I'm not Union—I'm only Love!"

I was surprised at Dave. He was as hard as a stone to her. Like a judge on the bench.

"It's all my own fault," I says. "I said she had turned Union. I thought she told me so. I guess she didn't. Anyhow, she's not Union—that's plain. We mustn't pester her."

"God above us, you don't understand—you don't understand—I am neither—nothing—now—God—"

She was scared and pleading now. It was Dave who was, really, unreasonable.

"Silence!" said Dave once more.

And there was silence for a moment. Then Dave, by force, takes her hands. Honestly, I don't think she ever loved him more than at that moment when he was almost beating her. You could see it. Like some poor caged pestered animal.

"Yes," says Evelyn, more sorry than I ever saw or heard her, "it's over. I'll keep quiet. I'll be glad to. There's nothing to be done. It can't be mended. You don't understand. You can't, won't. I can't make you. I mustn't. Yes—I'll keep quiet. It must be acts now, not words. And quickly—quickly!"

"Yes," says Dave, "there's something wrong

here, and we've got to find out what it is—and who—and quickly. While you were away—"

He turns to Jon and me.

"—two Union soldiers came to the door. They knew that *you* two were away. Now, who were they hunting?"

"You," says I before I could think.

"Dave," shrieks Evelyn. "*Now* do you see! *That* is what you've done!"

Jon turns away and says nothing.

"Then they meant to take me with them—if they had found me?" says Dave.

"It must be," says Jon, then, the only one who was quiet, "that you look like the spy, Mallory."

"That's what I have thought, heretofore," says Dave. "But there must be something more. They know, by this time, that we are loyal."

"All but you!" says Evelyn.

"If they tackle you again, Dave," says I, "give 'em the countersign—'Washington'. That'll settle 'em."

It was not Dave but Evelyn who asked what it was.

"Washington," says I. "We'd better all keep it in mind."

Dave takes no notice of it. He's looking at Evelyn. Jon kicks me on the shin—I don't know what for to this day. But I hears Evelyn repeat, under her breath:

"Washington! Thank God! If you don't understand, you help—in your ignorance."

Dave turns on her savage.

"I love you," says he. "What has happened here makes no difference in that. But, you must be at least courteous to Jon and daddy—even when in this devil's mood. I will make you be—even if I have to beat you."

"What?" she asks, as if it wasn't possible that it was from Dave. "Did you say that you would beat me—me—you, Dave?"

And she inches up and touches him, mighty pitiful.

Dave pays no attention to the touch, but says, hard as iron:

"Yes! That is what I said."

"None of us are like ourselves any more," says Evelyn, "but none are so far from it as you, my dear, dear David. Think what you have said to me! Is it the war has set us all at each other's throats? Let us come back to each other! After all, what does all the rest matter if we have each other? Without you-all I have nobody—nothing. I am sorry for my part in it. Come! Let's put our arms around each other and make up!"

She holds out her arms and passes her eyes from one to the other, but some devil she had roused was in us all and held us, and none of us answered—not even Jon. She gets very pale and staggers a little, then drops her head on her breast and turns to go away.

"Wait!" commands Dave. "There are some questions you must answer. Wait!"

"Please let me go and kill myself!" she begs. But, then, she shudders and comes back to Dave as if she had thought of something terrible.

"No, no! No, I must live. That is the only way! Don't be afraid. I won't kill myself. I daren't." So, she stands trembling and sorry, like a whipped child, among us three brutes waiting for more whipping. If there is one moment in my life of which I am more ashamed than another, that's the one.

Dave spoke at last, but it was still like a young brute.

"I don't know who is the cause of this. But it is certain that you, Evelyn, through your passions, have your share in it. Therefore, you have got to do your share of the suffering."

"Yes," whispers Evelyn, "I shall do my full share of the suffering. I am willing. Ready. And my share is laid out! I know it now! May I go—daddy—Jon—Dave, and begin it? I can't stand *much* more!"

But Dave says, more quiet now:

"No. This is the wrong time to let you go, Evelyn, or you us. It's my opinion that we've got to hang together or we'll hang separately —as Benjamin Franklin said." He was all

changed in a minute, and just held her and looked in her face without a word, till her head drooped, and her shoulders shook, and she cried like a baby.

"Now, we're all right," smiles Dave, "because we're all wrong and sorry for it," and puts his arm about her and leads her out under the plums.

And, presently, we could hear them—talking. Once in a while something came through:

"Yes, oh, my dear Dave, once I used to be crazy about the South. I love it still, of course—just as you love your own country. Till *you* came. Then there was nothing but you. Tonight, Dave, it wasn't that—my Southern sympathies. That's all gone. It was *you*—in awful peril—that was it."

"Of what?" asks Dave.

"I can't tell you—I can't tell you!"

"Because you don't know," laughs Dave. "Same way with me. I can't tell what I don't know. None of us know. Maybe it's nothing."

"No, Dave, we're ruined—me—you—daddy—Jon!"

"Well, I love this kind of ruins."

I suppose he kissed her then.

"Dave—just one thing—more—"

"More than one, more—"

"Is everything forgiven and apologized?"

"Sh!" laughs Dave. "I'm ashamed."

"Do you think you will ever—ever talk to me—about me—no matter how bad I may be—like that, again, Dave?"

"I'm going to get insured against it," laughs Dave.

"Dave," says Evelyn, "do you know I came near dying?"

"No," says Dave.

"Yes, my heart stopped—quite stopped. Everything had passed away. And, Dave, my dear Dave, do you know that I'm afraid that if you are that cross to me again—I shall die! Yes, right before you. For I, really, can't live without you. Honest, when I felt, this evening, that you were going away from me, everything went out of me with you—even my life. You came back to me just in time to save my life. So, if you don't want me to die right

before you—please don't be so cross any more!"

Then, after a long while: "And I daren't die, Dave, I daren't! I must live!"

"Not on your life!" laughs Dave. "I hate funerals."

What do you think of that! Only fifteen minutes between hell and Heaven! And Dave traveling the way faster than Evelyn! Sure the war had got us all wrong somehow—the rest of us worse than Evelyn now!

XXII

THE WEDDING MARCH—TO THE PUMP TROUGH

"DAVE," says I, afterward, "you certainly fixed that up grand—after unfixing it grand. You deserve a horse-trainer's prize at the next county fair—and a spanking."

Dave laughs like he'd burst open.

"Wasn't I red war and rumors of war—that day? I wonder what was the matter with me? I was fighting on both sides, wasn't I?"

"You was, Davy," says I, "and in the middle. And you done it fine. But what did she say afterward?"

"Well, let me see," says Dave, laughing. "She said she was ruined and we were all ruined, but that, maybe, if her strength and courage held out, she'd be able to rescue us all, yet—by sacrificing herself—"

"What was the ruin?"

"Lord, I don't know."

"Didn't she tell you?"

"N-no," says Dave, "I don't think she could. No one can. Something's got to happen to let us know. Maybe it's because she's a rebel. She thinks that she's the whole thing, and soon she'll have us licked and begging for our lives. She's going to try to save ours for us, so's we can beg."

"You think that's it?" asks I. Dave nods.

"Well, what's the harm in letting her think so hereafter, if she's happy with it? It's better than a fight with her. As soon as it wears off and she finds herself the only one still fighting, she'll get lonely and stop. I don't care whether she's a rebel or not, if she just stays Evelyn. I guess we *all* feel mighty mean about the other night. Why are you recalling it?"

"What else did she say, Davy?" asks I.

"What else? Um—she said she loved me, daddy."

"Uhu! And what did you say, Davy?"

"I said that I loved her."

"I expect that was the end of the conversation. There was nothing more to be said, was there?"

"Oh, yes. That was only the beginning. She said that she loved me the most."

"And you said—"

"That I loved her the most."

"Well, *that* must have been the end, not?"

"Not at all, daddy. We talked two hours longer. She said I didn't."

"Ah, and you had no answer to that, so?"

"Certainly. I said I did."

"Well—was *that* all?"

"No. She said she'd prove it."

"*Then* she had all your checkers, hadn't she?"

"No. I said she couldn't."

"Goshens! Then *you* had 'em!"

"Not yet. She said I should remember that—only a little while!"

"And you says you will?"

"Yes, daddy."

"And what then?"

"She cries like a baby."

"Anything more?"

"I kisses her."

"And—?"

"Intermission—arms all around."

"Well?"

"Well, then I says that I'm sorry about the other night, and that you were a brute."

"Proceed."

"She said she was sorry. That she thought she was killed. But not just yet."

"And, so—"

"I says I'm more sorry."

"And yet—"

"She says that she's more sorry and she can prove it."

"So?"

"I says she can't."

"Then she had you."

"She says, again, she can, and to remember it. Think of her when it happens."

"And you will, not?"

"No. I said I was going to forget it and she should. That I'd never make her sorry again. I really don't know what came over me that night—unless I was, at last, fighting mad at that skunk, Mallory, and taking it out on her."

"And she says so, too?"

"She says if she only could forget it! But that she had to remember it. Our salvation was in it."

"And, of course—"

"She cries, again, like a baby."

"So? And what?"

He hooks his arm in mine and drags me to the horse trough, whistling the wedding march!

"If we can just jolly her a little longer the war will be over and she'll be licked and have to stop fighting. Of course, she'll never give up till after—and then—"

He whistles some more of the wedding march and leads me back.

"You know the law is that a husband may castigate his wife with a stick—provided it is

no thicker than his thumb. See! My thumb's about an inch thick. Thanks to you, daddy. Understand?"

"You'd never do it, David," says I. "You'll never be like that day again. You'd better enlist in the Union army, too—for protection. You were too young when you came home. But you could get in now. You're much older-looking since you fell in love."

"Not on your wafer," says Dave. "They don't take any one in love. It's a fundamental disability. You and Jon can have all the war you want. They'll take you. You're not in love. I've got something better on hand. And there it is!" he says, as Evelyn comes up the yard. "She is the captain, the general, the commander-in-chief! 'N a rum tum tummy! 'N a rum tum tum!"

He runs off to meet her, singing:

"Wie komme' die Soldat' in den Himmel?
Wie komme' die Soldat' in den Himmel?
Auf a grosse' weisse' Shimmel
Komme' die Soldat' in den Himmel!"

He dragged her clean up to where I was, and, bowing, with their hands together, they sung at me:

"Ja, in mei' Vater's Garten
Da wachst 'n schönes Blümelein—"

"And, here's the flower, daddy," says Dave.

Then he drags her away again, and in a minute I saw them on the horses riding and yelling after each other up the Red Rock Road.

Such foolishness!

Yet—do you blame me for not thinking of any trouble when Dave and Evelyn was like that? What did all that of the other day mean after this? Nothing!

XXIII

LUCAS MALLORY—AT LAST

ABOUT two weeks later, one day, Evelyn had been in town and came home late wearing a veil all bound round her head. This was unusual with her, and besides, it was warm.

"I look so dreadfully when I am tired, daddy, that's the reason," she said to me when I asked her. "And might I have a little supper in my room?"

"Of course," says I.

"Then I think I'll go straight to bed. I'm fearfully tired."

"You act like you're going to faint," says I. "If you feel any worse, let me know and one of the boys must go for the doctor."

"Oh, I'll be all right in the morning. Sleep is all I need. Sleep! Oh, God—sleep, sleep!"

She repeats it and sighs like she don't know what it means. And I don't think she did. She looked it. Her light was always burning.

It was my watch that night, and I was further from home than usual. For I had seen some curious lights in the neighborhood of the Ferry Road. I was sitting, in the edge of Harg's woods, quiet, with my carbine ready, listening for a repetition of some sounds I had heard. A whistle and a cough, it seemed like, when I sees something more substantial than the shadows I had watched so often steal out of the woods into the road. In a moment I knew that it was a man. Then, though it was shadowy, I saw that it was a soldier, because of the faint gleam of his rifle.

"Halt!" I calls out. "Who is it? Don't move. If you do I'll fire."

If I'd fired without so much talk I'd have got him then and there. But he dodged back into the bushes. I started to run.

"I'm a Union officer," I yells, "and by the Lord, I'll do my duty if you don't stop. If you

do you won't be hurt. I'm armed. Give the password!"

Well, just about the last syllable, he fires at me, the charge going somewhere up in the tree-tops. Then came several shots at me from different directions.

You know how it is. When a man fires on you, especially several, you fire, too, though he may have missed you by a mile. I suppose it's the intention you don't like. I fired as I ran—straight at the spot in the bushes where the other lead had come from. I heard a cry and knew I hadn't missed.

"It's your own fault," I says, as I runs up. "If you'd stopped and answered I wouldn't have fired. Are you badly hurt? I don't like to kill people. But these are war-times and—"

I had reached the man. He lay quite still. I lifted him in my arms and ran to the house. Now and then he'd murmur, "Washington!" I remembered, afterward, that he seemed not quite the sort of body I had thought to pick up.

I put him down on the kitchen floor and struck a light. It was Evelyn.

She was in heavy army shoes, and a new Confederate uniform. Her hair had been cut off.

I raced up-stairs with her and put her on her bed, calling Betsy. But, before waiting for her to get there, I ripped open her jacket to find the wound. A rough gray undershirt, a man's, instead of the dainty things she ought to have worn, covered her nice body. It was soaked with blood.

XXIV

A FAVOR TO SHOOT HER

BEFORE Betsy could dress and get there Evelyn came to. She understood the whole thing at once.

"Evelyn," I says, "I didn't know it was you."

Well, with all that blood running out of her she laughs and hugs me!

"And I didn't know it was you! Thought it a picket. What a state of things! How did you make your voice roar so? My, but you frightened me. You could tell that by the way I fired. Did any stars fall?"

I couldn't believe it for a minute or two!

"Daddy, do it again," she begs, "please roar again! I suppose you were scared, too!"

She laughs and hugs me again.

"Evelyn, forgive me," I says, sorry enough for both of us, God knows.

"On one condition," says she, with all her wits, and putting a hand on the wound to stop its bleeding, "that you never tell on me. And help me."

Well, I was in such a state that I would have agreed to any other condition. But I says:

"On one condition—that you don't die."

"Agreed," she says. "I won't die. Oh, I'm so glad to live—now! It is really not much. In the lower left-hand corner of my jacket is a package of things for self-help in case of wounds—sewed in the lining. Cut it out."

As I took up the bloody jacket she laughed again and said:

"That's what I was making, and unmaking, like Penelope, daddy, dear. Not a trousseau, is it? And it is all beautifully done. Feather-stitching, felling, quilting! Look at it. And see what *you've* done to it—ruined it at the very first wearing. I said you were never to see it. And I meant it. But—you never can

tell. Oh, my God, I thank thee! Now—now you understand, daddy!"

But it was sobs for a minute then.

I got the bandages and the medicines, and with a little help from me she bound up the wound as good as any doctor could.

"Stand outside the door," she commands me briskly, "and if Betsy should come, tell her I had nightmare and called out, but am asleep again."

I did so, and, when Betsy came, which was soon, I told her that. She was glad to be able to go back to bed again.

"Come in," whispers Evelyn, through the door.

When I enters again, Evelyn is in her nightie, like a regular girl. The uniform is gone. You'll hardly believe it, but she laughs and pulls me down on the bed beside her.

"Don't look so sorry, daddy," she laughs, "you have done me a big favor."

"Gosh-a-mighty!" says I, "that's the first time I ever heard it called a favor to shoot you!"

"You didn't shoot me much. I had to go—just simply had to—to save us. I was in such a position—that I had to. You and Jon enlisting forced me. Anyhow, they wouldn't have waited much longer for the making of the uniform. What immortal fools we be! Once I tried to make myself believe that I wanted to; but the first thought I had after your bullet struck—and before I fainted—was that now I had a good excuse for not— How I am running on! Never mind. The blood has stopped. You won't even have to get me a doctor. If I should need one I will let you know promptly. Don't worry. So much for that. I can take care of it. Your bullet went through. And at a not very thick place. If no blood poisoning sets in I will be all right. I know you use nice clean bullets. If it does turn bad off for a doctor you go—*you,* not Jon or Dave—and you must keep my secret as sworn, aforesaid. But about my hair—that's the difficulty. It will be best for you to say that it was coming out so fast that *you*

advised the cutting. That you cut it, in fact. It's not a very good job. I will stay in my room for some time—I will have to—and by the time they see me again they will not be surprised by its loss. Is it all right? Are we pals in this?"

She was so gay and happy that this was still another Evelyn! Full of fun after just escaping being killed! What do you think of that!

"Yes," I says, "pals in this and everything to the death."

"Not death," she shivers. "I don't have to die now—since I'm killed."

She pulls me down and hugs and kisses me.

"Oh, daddy," she says, happy as can be, "you certainly did me a great favor in shooting me! They'll be satisfied with that. Who'd ever thought of anything so easy? They'll know who Mallory is now. God knows where I would have been by this time—because I must—must. Now I am here"—and she whispers, soft as praying,—"where Dave—is!"

Then some more hugs and kisses—and she pushes me away.

"Good night, dearest of daddies, you've done me the favor of my life. Honest! I wonder if I could have carried it through? When I heard that whistle I wanted to run home instead of to the Potomac. My head knew the way South, but my legs knew only the way back to you-all. Dave's black was waiting for me. I was to go into the cavalry,—Stuart's. I had already enlisted—as Mallory."

Then it seemed as if the horror of it suddenly came over her. She sobbed, shrieked, raved for a minute.

"Oh, daddy, you don't know what you have saved me from. Why, daddy, if you had had to kill me—if I were lying here now dying—I would thank you! Yes, that would be better than anything I had planned! Yes! Daddy, daddy, God bless that bullet of yours! And, yes, yes, as I said before, good night, dearest of daddies, good night! Thank you—thank you so much for shooting me. There seemed no way out. Then you come with your gun—and, lo! it is all fixed as quickly as that shot

of yours came after me. Yes, yes, good night —good night—"

Then I has an idea—got from Jon.

"Now listen. There's a way—a way to happiness for us all—a very nice way. It's all fixed. Jon has been sure that you were making your wedding things in your room and that you and Dave were going to spring a wedding on us. The way out of the whole matter is to do it, carry that whole idea out. As Dave's wife they've got to let you alone. Of course, he'll beat you sometimes like that night, ha, ha!"

Such a light as came into her face at that I never saw before.

"Daddy, oh, my darling daddy! Do you think it can be done? Will Dave marry me? —with so many things to be explained?"

"Sight unseen!" says I, glad that she took it so well. "I'll see to that. I'll speak to Parr Kellermann as soon as you are well enough to get ready."

"I'll begin to-night," laughs Evelyn. "Make him marry me!"

"Not quite so fast as that," says I, serious now. "Before I make Dave marry you, you got to promise that you'll behave. You remember how savage he was when he said he'd beat you. Well, if you don't behave he'll do it. He'll break you just like he does horses!"

"Yes, yes!" she laughs, and hugs me, "I know!"

"Well, I hate to see Dave treat you like a horse."

"Don't the horses like him afterward?"

"You bet they do."

"So shall I, daddy, darling."

"What, you mean that you ain't afraid to be broke like a horse by Dave?"

She shook her head.

"By goshens, I believe you're crazy to have him do it!"

She nods.

"Well," I says, "I expect the soldier was

right that I am a little slow at the head. I'll never understand that."

"Not till you're a woman," says Evelyn. "Good night, daddy, dear. And thank you for not saying it the other time. No. Wait. *I* have an idea."

"Hurry—before it gets away!" laughs I.

"They're both so innocent and trusting, not such villains as you and I, that, maybe, Jon and Dave would believe that that is the cause of my illness—getting ready for my wedding. I—I was so crazy for it! You know that's an awful strain on a girl."

"I've never been a girl," says I. "But how are you going to make Dave believe in the craziness for the wedding? He's asked you seventy-five times to fix a day and you wouldn't."

"I couldn't, daddy, daddy, dear. Don't you see that this was hanging over me? Oh, it has been like the sword of Damocles ever since Dave came. For, it was then too late already.

What I had to do to-day was inevitable then. Wasn't it awful?"

"Rather awful," says I, "but don't say dam'. It's not nice for ladies"—though, of course, I knew who Damocles was—I looked it up. "The way to fix it is to fix old Jon first, and then get him after Dave. Dave'll believe anything Jonthy tells him—if it's that the end of the world is coming to-morrow at seven minutes apast eight. And Jon'll believe in anything that comes from you, if it turns white black. But don't forget that *Dave's* the fellow you're going to marry, not Jon, and if he don't know anything about it—"

She laughs in the old-fashioned happy way.

"Oh, my dear, old, blind daddy! Why, what do you think has been going on right under your big old nose all the time?"

"Well, what?" says I.

"Daddy, Dave asked me to marry him the first day and also the second and third day after he came home!"

"Gosh-a-mighty!" says I. "Now, you don't say, you don't really say so! That quick! Not a minute wasted! And what did you say?"

She laughs again, like she'd burst open.

"What did I say! Do you really have to be told *that?*"

"Yes," I says, "I want to know. I'm thick in my skull."

Then she turns solemn.

"Why, daddy, I said what every other woman on earth would have said, if he had asked them!"

"He didn't ask the others, I expect," says I, "anyhow, not quite all of them. And I don't know what they said. But what did you say? —that's the conundrum that bothers me."

She pulls my ear down and whispers in it:

"Yes! And then, so that he couldn't misunderstand—it would have been frightful for him to misunderstand, like his dear old daddy, wouldn't it?"

"I expect so," nods I.

"Well, then, so that he might not misunder-

stand, I said it many times over, and every time I said it I—"

Gosh! She kisses me about fifty times!

"Now, is it all perfectly plain?" she asks.

"Well," I says, "I expect that means that you're engaged?"

"Oh, daddy! What did *you* do when that happened? Maybe you are a little thick—" She hammers my head.

"Me? I had to have it plain as a big red barn. You can't fire things into me like out of a gun. I got to have time to think what it is first. Up and down, right and left, backward and forward, inside and out. I asked mother, right out if she'd *marry* me. No kissing. And she said just as right out that she would. Then she puts her hands down at her sides, and I pushes my whiskers out of the way and kisses her. Anyhow, I think I did. That was the intention—though I'm not sure where I struck. You see, I had read all about proposing in *The Lover's Companion,* and so far as I could recollect when it happened, that is

the way it said, and that is the way it happened—so far as I could recollect."

"If Dave and I had only known that you had *The Lover's Companion!* I suppose we did it very badly. On the first day he just suggests it. On the second day he demands it. On the third he suddenly lifts me from my horse, and nearly breaks me in two. 'You're going to be married,' says he, 'before you know it, girl!' "

" 'You don't say so!' says I. 'And who is the unhappy bridegroom?' "

" 'I am,' " says Dave. 'Now say when?' "

"And, did you?" asks I.

"Not yet," laughs Evelyn, "but I can easy say that I had fixed the time by myself to surprise him. Yes, tell them that I got sick making my wedding things!"

"All right," I says, and starts to go.

But she pulls me back again.

"Do you think they'll stop to wonder why a bride cuts off her hair?"

"Dave won't. He'll never know it if you don't show it to him."

"Then, let's not say anything about it till after the wedding."

"All right. Anyhow, you can wear a net, filled with hair out of the sofa."

"And, daddy, I think, in a very little while, you *might* speak to Parr Kellermann."

"All in good time. I got to get it through Dave that you are going to marry him, by fair means or foul, and behave yourself first."

"And last, too, daddy," she laughs.

I was trying hard to go.

"And, daddy, dear daddy, do you think you could get Jon and Dave to stay in the house for a while? As long as I am sick?"

"Why?" says I.

"Never mind that—if your skull's *so* thick! Just get them to do it. If nothing else will do, say that I asked it. If they will, they may come here every day and be with me! Then I'll be sure."

"My," says I, "do you think anything else is needed? That's enough."

"Daddy, dear," whispers Evelyn, "put Dave's horse back in the stable. He's in Harg's woods."

XXV

ORDER NUMBER 249

ON MY bureau was a note she had written for me.

"Daddy," it said, "*I* am Mallory—this is the only solution. They know in the North now. They know in the South. And you know what they do to spies. Both sides. And the horror of it is that they won't do it to me, but to Dave, who they think is—Mallory. But if they know that Mallory has gone from here to Stuart, and I have made that certain, all will be well, only, he *must* turn up there—oh, daddy, daddy, daddy! Can't you help me? Can't some one? Just think of it! I must be a soldier. I'll die of shame, of course, but I daren't until I have taken the danger from you-all, and am known as Mallory.

"You see, daddy, dear, how horrid a master evil becomes. I began to help—just help the South a little in my anger, in my madness for vengeance. That wasn't bad, was it, to help my people?—oh, I do love them! And Dave hadn't come and there was no Dave-love. Well, I couldn't tell them that I was a woman—a girl, in fact—could I?—that wouldn't have been nice—so I let them think I was a man. I took the name of Lucas Mallory. Daddy, the thing I didn't think of—didn't once expect, was that they would not suspect *me,* when it came to suspecting, but all of you, and last *have to* think Dave was Mallory. See? Well, there is nothing to be done but for me, who brought the evil upon you, to take it with me. This I do to-night. The spy, Lucas Mallory, disappears to-night and reappears in the Confederate army. All of his activity here will cease. I have signaled that and when Stuart corroborates me, which I shall see to, you will hear no more of suspicion or treason—and will be left at peace.

But me—where, *what* shall I be? And Dave—will he hate me?

"Keep on loving me, oh, please! Make them all love me—always! Don't tell Dave. Say I was drowned—or something like that. If you knew how hard it is! If you knew the sacrifice! I must go. The signals are getting violent—Good-by! Forever, good-by!"

Something brought to mind the bundle of papers the officer had dropped that day when he got Betsy's pies. I went and got them.

They were mostly letters from a wife and a little girl—with their photographs. But there was one which wasn't.

"Order No. 249," it read. "All persons in the guise of pretended loyal citizens, acting under false names or other false pretenses, within our lines, and giving aid, arms, ammunition or supplies of any kind whatsoever, or furnishing information to, or communicating with, the enemy, are spies, and are to be taken, condemned, and shot as such.

In this connection, the government, and the general commanding the department, call your attention to the rumors of the activity of a secret, treasonable organization named the Knights of the Golden Circle, composed of so-called Copperheads, and sympathizers, for the purpose of furnishing comfort, giving aid, supplies, recruits and information of our movements to the enemy, a lodge of which is said to be in your immediate vicinity. You are especially expected to capture and thus summarily end the activity of a spy named Lucas Mallory, a man who has, thus far, eluded all attempts to take him. Before his execution you will endeavor to secure from him such information as will enable you to apprehend all members of the said treasonable organization, or organizations, together with such evidence as can be secured, as well as to locate the said lodge and capture and dispose of all persons having anything to do with its operation. The general is determined that this hot-

bed of treason shall be stamped out. And to effect this you are hereby given military authority adequate to the object proposed."

XXVI

TANKOO

WELL, I must leave you to imagine what my feelings were as I looked down, day after day, on that beautiful, bloody thing with my bullet in it. I can't tell you—it chokes me up now—unless a little story of Jon and me would do it.

I used to gun a good deal when I was young. Once, when I was out for rabbits I found a cunning young one just a couple of inches long, a regular little cotton-tail—with no parents about. I expect, maybe, that I had killed 'em. It was starving to death. I brung it home for Jon—about three or four year old then. Well, you never saw no better friends! Jon fed him like a mother and he took it. That little bunny would follow Jon about like they was brothers.

He'd come to the table and sit at Jon's elbow and eat—sometimes out of the same dish.

Jon he made a little funny collar, out of some oyster pearls and a string for him. And he called him Tankoo, because he tried to say "Thank you" when I brung it for him. He growed so fast with all the feed Jon pushed into him that soon he was a large regular rabbit. But he never stopped those intimate acquaintances with Jon.

Then, one morning, in the gunning season, I looks out of the window and sees a rabbit running about in the Red Meadow. I grabs my gun and calls out to Jon to come and we'd "get him." I know now that when I said "get him" Jon didn't think I meant to kill him. He looked a little funny at my gun, but we were on the run to the pasture and he didn't have time to say anything. When we got to the meadow the bunny had disappeared. But, in a minute he runs straight toward us from behind some bushes. I fires and he falls. When we gets to him it is Tankoo.

Little Jon says nothing, only looks at me, for a long time. I remember that look now. How pale his little face was! How his young blue eyes blazed accusation at me!

He took Tankoo in his arms, all bloody and ragged—not understanding—not understanding at all—and when he can't hold his little head up, only open and close his brown eyes, like he was tired and hurt, Jon holds him out to me and shrieks:

"Fix him! Holes in him! Oo done it!"

But there was no fixing Tankoo. He put his head under my little boy's arm and died.

And I don't like to remember his look when he drew the head of the animal forth and found the eyes steadily open but in them no sight.

When he understood he looked up at me. And I see that look often in the nights when I think cruel thoughts.

Betsy said, afterward, that when Tankoo found us both gone he ran about like crazy to find us. So she took him to the window up-

stairs, where he could see, then let him go and he scampered off after us—just to love us, she said, and got shot for it.

In the most remote and beautiful part of the garden the little boy buried Tankoo. Then he made a small tablet for the grave on which he got Betsy to write:

TANKOO
KILLED BY DADDY
JUNE 10TH, 1859.

I have never killed an animal since. And only the war made me raise my gun against my own kind. But, I think I never saw a man fall in battle that that saying of little Jon's didn't come to me:

"Fix him! Holes in him! You done it!"

And then I would, often, see that little tablet Jon had placed at the bunny's grave:

TANKOO
KILLED BY DADDY

Only, instead of killed, the tablet I saw read "murdered".

And Jon has told me that the same thoughts have come to him amidst the dead and wounded on the battle-field.

No! I wouldn't kill an animal. But I would kill my own kind—in that thing of murder called War.

And that is what constantly came into my mind when I was with Evelyn:

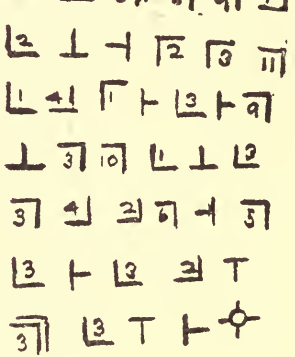
"Fix her! Holes in her! You done it!"

Next day was uncomfortable for me. For, besides lying to all the rest, I had to look out that there was no change for the worse in Evelyn. But she was so happy—even happier than the night before—that I had shot her that she seemed to forget the wound. It was regular faith-cure.

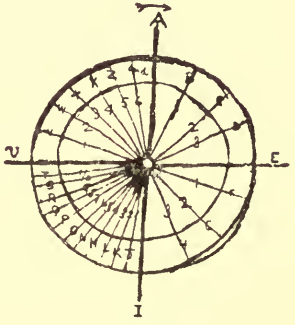
"Why, I could get up, daddy," she laughs, "if you weren't working to make my hair-cut convincing."

In the afternoon I wanders up to the garret. There were two lamps near the window facing south, which I had never seen before. Nearly new. Stuffed behind the window-

frame, like some one had done it hastily, was some fresh clean writing-paper with this on it:



And on the other side of the frame was another paper—ragged and old, with this on it.



I takes the things back to ask Evelyn what it meant.

"Well," she says after a while, "if you had promised to go to dinner at a friend's house and got shot—wouldn't you send your regrets?"

"Yes, I expect I would," says I, "if it wasn't dangerous."

"You may tear up that chart, daddy, dear, and put away the lamps. It's all over—like a nightmare. They're no more use. I want to forget it. You do, too. I wish we could make the trees grow again. It is all over. And, if they come for me—why, we'll fight, won't we?"

"Like an army," says I, "defending their last ditch!"

"Yes, daddy," she laughs and cries, all together, "I've fought, bled, and nearly died for my country and against my love, haven't I?"

"Yes," I says.

"And I've paid, haven't I?"

"Yes."

"And been foolish?"

"Very," says I.

"I'm just Evelyn, hereafter. Not a rebel—not a Union—not anything but Evelyn! Waiting to be wife to Dave. Nothing more. *That's* a woman's business. To be a wife—mother."

As you'll notice, she didn't tell me what it meant, and I was a little curious—like we all are—not? So I didn't tear up the diagram, but showed it to Jon, thinking he might know, telling him that I had found it near Crider's in my watch the night before.

"Why," says Jonthy, opening his eyes, "this is the signal chart of the Knights of the Golden Circle. They say you can spell out anything with a light. That's the Golden Circle. Why, the government will give anything for this!"

"Well," I says, "the government ain't going to get it. In a minute it'll be tore up."

"Yes, I guess that's better," nods Jon. "It might make more trouble."

"Spell this," I says, handing him the other paper.

Well, by the help of the chart he did it after a time.

"Mallory caught by Federals. Badly wounded. Will die," is what it read—as you can see for yourself.

Jon grabs my hand.

"I hate to kill things, daddy, and to gloat over others' miseries. But I believe that I am glad Mallory is caught. Now we're shut of him!"

Poor old Jon! He wouldn't have been so glad if he had known who Mallory was.

That night I went to the garret again, to watch Ben Crider and a couple of others, at his garret window, making fools of themselves. And I thought how I could get even and have some to spare if I would just get one of the soldiers on duty to come up there with me. But, of course, that might have made trouble for Evelyn. It was so plain that I could read it, almost, myself. They were asking for reports—answers to earlier signals—and demanding daily reports. They were clean crazy. From the way they acted and talked, they

didn't believe that Mallory was hurt. They wanted some proof of it. I had a great mind to try a little foolishness with the light myself, and had already struck a match to light one of the lamps, when I remembered, again, that it would be bad for Evelyn, and put the match out. But after that match their signals got furious.

The whole thing was well arranged. The trees cut down at our house and those from his made just about enough of an avenue to shine the lights through above the other trees. You had to be in line with 'em from the outside to see anything—and also high up above the trees in the valley—and this was almost impossible.

I decided to get away and let them alone or else I'd do something foolish and hurt Evelyn. I knew that she would do all that was necessary —if anything was—to shut it off.

But coming down-stairs, my candle glittered on something shining on the floor at the dark place where the garret stair took off from the

stairs to the second story. I bent to look at it and found that it was a drop of dried blood. And then I found others—all the way down.

I went to Evelyn's room and said:

"Did you climb those stairs and send that message?"

"What message?" laughs she.

"Mallory caught by Federals. Badly wounded. Will die," repeated I.

"It wasn't quite true, was it, daddy, was it? Is that what you're cross about? I'm not going to die!"

"No, Evelyn, it's true," says I, "you didn't know but you were dying then. I tracked you by the blood."

"Are you satisfied, daddy?" she begs. "I did the best I could—to save us!"

"You did the best you could, God bless you, girl!" I says, and we both cried together. "You are a brave girl!"

"I really think, daddy," she sobs, "that I've saved us—don't you?"

"Yes," I says.

I had meant to tell her about those furious messages flying above, but she looked so piteous that I thought it might worry her, and so I didn't.

XXVII

HIS SHARE OF GLORY

THE editor not only got his hundred men but twenty over in case any should back out—or to begin a new company. And it was off to war for certain. I think those words of his sunk in. It was just in the lull when everybody, North and South, was tired of the war and when a hard push either way would win. And from the spirit of the men who enlisted, they were of the opinion that the war had lasted long enough, and it was time to give the push from the North.

It wasn't so bad as long as they played soldier in zouave uniforms and shiny arms. But when bread and coffee and meat had almost disappeared, when paper money was worth twice itself, when nobody was doing anything

but fight, when the farms were lying idle and barns tumbling down—

And then we began to know that much more of that would ruin the country beyond repair—so's any other country—which was fool enough to want it—could step in and take it—and us with it! The Johnies were fighting harder than we thought they would to get away from us, and we were fighting harder than they thought we would to keep them with us—just *because* they had proved such fine fellows. Well, it was like a fight between two boys—which one jokes about until the noses bleed and the eyes are bunged shut. Then it's got to stop. It's serious. But just then the boys fight the hardest, and the blindest—just about the time they *got* to stop on account of being played out.

I met Kratz, the editor, on the street, and I didn't know him! He was in a zouave uniform and wore a sword a yard long. Second lieutenant!

"Halt!" he yells at me, as happy as a baby! "Vonner, your uniform—all of them—will be ready the day after to-morrow. We drill twice a day after that. Center Square. Be on hand or I'll send a guard after you. Oh, man, don't you see the victory already? Why, a year ago I would no more have thought of getting a hundred men out of Excelsior for the Union army than I would have thought of flying. Well, don't you see what that means? The South has used up all they have. Poor chaps! Not another man can they get into the army. Lord, haven't they fought! While the North is just waking up. Don't lag. Let's go and end it. Let us get our share of the glory before it is too late. Let us help to *force* a peace! We want all those bully boys south of Mason and Dixon's line back again in our bed. They're too good to lose."

Well, do you think he got his share of the glory? There's a tombstone in Gethsemane burying-ground with this on:

JACOB KRATZ

SECOND LIEUTENANT AND
ORGANIZER OF COMPANY "K",
8TH REGT. MD. VOLS.,
KILLED AT
CHANCELLORSVILLE.

But the stone has fallen on its face, and, though I lifted it up the other day, I could hardly make out the words. I asked a young man passing by if Jacob Kratz had lived in Excelsior.

"Never heard of him—and I've been right here all my life!" he answered.

"Who's paying for the uniforms and so on?" asks I of Kratz.

"I am," says he. "You think I'm too poor? Well, I am. But I've sold the paper to Gorman. If we lose, I shan't want it. I'll emigrate. If we win I'll start a new one three times as big! Yes, I will. I'll set the type and pull the press, and carry it around to the subscribers myself. And glad to do it. Yes, if we

can save this glorious Union, a government better than any ever conceived in this world before, bring our Southern brothers back into it, I'll give all I have and get more to give!"

Ah, the foolishness!

But I saw that red-headed idiot at Chancellorsville on that hot Sunday morning go into the smoke with a crazy yell, too, not knowing what was before him. When I saw him again, he was in a lead-lined box, with that yell still on his lips, that light still in his face. And I thought then of what he had said about the glorious Union. He believed it. He died for it! It must be so! By the Lord God, it *is* so!

XXVIII

WHERE OUR CLUB MET

WELL, that's what I told the boys—that she got sick working on her wedding things, and her hair fell out so's I had to cut it off for her to save it.

"What's that?" says Dave, nearly breaking me in two.

"She's going to be married," says I. "If it's not to either or both of you boys you'd better be looking after your property."

Jon, you remember his idea about it, he understood, and smiled and nodded, like he knew all about it from the first.

But Dave was puzzled a bit.

"I expect I better go and congratulate myself," he says. "It may be one of the things daddy thinks funny. And yet it *may* be a wed-

ding in our own family. Come, Jonthy, and chaperon me."

And he drags Jon after him straight to the door.

There, he knocks softly a bit, then he says:

"Evelyn, if you are not asleep and hear me, be ready, in two minutes, by the watch. Jonthy and I are coming in to see what daddy is lying about."

I had followed, sure that there'd be trouble, but what do you think! She laughed, happy as happy, and says:

"Why waste two whole minutes!"

Dave gave a yell, and in he went. In fact the yell carried him as far as the bed, where he hugs her—and the first thing you know she's fainted like a rag in his arms.

I never saw Dave really scared before—scared so he shivered, and chattered his teeth.

But she brought herself to, in a minute, and put Dave's arms away a bit.

"It hurts a little—there," she smiles, white as a sheet.

"What's the matter?" begs Dave. "You look like a ghost—and faint dead away the moment I touch you. Daddy! What is it?"

He turns on me like he was going to hit me. But Jonthy stops him and holds his hands a minute.

While they were all turned from her, before any one notices her hair, Evelyn reaches under the pillow and gets the most beautiful night-cap you ever saw—all pink ribbons and lace, and jams it on her head. She winks at me, and I knew that that settled the difficulty about the hair.

"Now, gentlemen," says Evelyn, "if you'll handle me a bit more carefully, I'm ready to entertain you."

"Is it so—the wedding?" asks Dave, making like he would lift her out of bed.

Evelyn nods and says:

"Yes. Do you like it?"

"Better than heaven!" says Dave, barely holding himself back.

"Take care of my sore spot!" says Evelyn. "I can answer that question of yours now—'When?'"

"Hurry!" says Dave.

"In a few days. Just as soon as I—can stand on my feet. I won't be married in bed."

"Thank you," says Dave, solemn.

"You look scared," laughs Evelyn.

"Yes," says Dave then, "I'm scared—scared half to death! Look at Evelyn, Jon! How pale! Is she dying?"

"I have been looking," says Jon, more scared than Dave. "Don't you think the best thing—the one thing—we can ask Evelyn is to tell us, honestly, whether or not she is seriously ill, and whether she is sure she will get well?"

"Yes," says Dave. "For God's sake, Evelyn, tell us that—and we'll be satisfied."

"Did you ever see me happier?" asks Evelyn.

"No!" says Jon and Dave at once.

"Are people happy who think they are sick

enough to die—and go away from daddy and Jon and Dave—or even be sick enough to be kept away from them a little while?"

"No!" says both my boys again.

"Then come here, both of you, all three of you! I want to tell you something."

We all sat as close to her on the bed as we could, and she sort of got her arms around all of us.

"Don't you know that a girl's wedding day —a girl who marries the one man in the world she *can* marry—is the maddest, darlingest, craziest day in all her life? Oh, it's a wonder they don't all go mad—die—before it arrives—as—as—I have done! She is a miser —gloating, not over sordid coins, but gossamer clothing! She is a pirate—begging, buying, stealing the most beautiful gems in the world to adorn herself—for him! She is a priestess, a nun, a devotee, praying, praying always for his and her and their happiness! She is already a wife—knowing, understanding, what it is to be bone of another's bone,

flesh of another's flesh! Oh, my dears, all a girl's life leads to and from that day. When we are old everything happens such and such a time after our wedding. When we are young every date is subordinate to 'When I am married.' Don't you wish you were all girls, working on your wedding gear, even though you sicken and die for it? Don't you wish you were ready to melt into some man's arms and be lost—lost forever? Have no name but his! Be nothing apart from him! Live only in his life, die when he dies!"

For a while no one spoke. Then Jon says, soft as praying:

"Yes. I wish I were a woman. There is nothing on the earth so beautiful!"

Now, what do you think of that! A man wishing he was a woman!

"Jonathan," I says, "don't be foolish. There must be men and women. Be glad to be what you are."

And, it was about the first time I ever knew Dave to be speechless. He didn't say a word.

Just put his lips down on Evelyn's, slow and soft, and let them stay there a long time. After all, I suppose he wasn't as speechless as I thought. I expect he said more than either Jon or me.

And so the three of us sat on her bed and had the happiest night that I remember.

And so it was every night. None of us ever knew each other right till then. Evelyn's bed was our little club. At last we ate our meals there, told the news there, and, in fact, spent nearly all of our time there.

And then one day, when no one was thinking of it, who walks in to the breakfast table, one morning, when we thought it too early to wake her, but Evelyn. And of all her loveliness, she never looked so lovely as then! She was excited by the exercise, for it was far too soon for that sort of thing, and the roses in her cheeks fairly flamed against their thinness and paleness, and her head was covered with short curls! She was in the prettiest of her dresses, one of rose-color, with a long train,

and loose, and it was no wonder that Dave flew at her and that she had to remind him, laughing, that it still hurt a little where he was in the habit of putting his arms.

Dave put her in her seat as carefully as if she were china, and says:

"And now, once more, when? To-day? You said as soon as you could stand on your feet—don't bother about clothes—they are bad for you!"

"Yes," smiles Evelyn, "to-day, if you wish—"

She looks around at Jon and me—

"—To-day if it suits us all—"

Jon turns pale. After all, I suppose, to stand up suddenly and see them married phased him a bit.

Then Dave, the happy, laughing, singing, dancing Dave, says:

"Daddy, you have Preacher Kellermann here by eleven o'clock, and wear your stovepipe; and Jonathan, you comb your hair and wash your face and be the best man—as you are,

anyhow—and Betsy'll give the bride away, and some pies—though, as she's given herself away already, I don't see why Betsy should work. But we'll have it all according to law. Anyhow, the rest don't matter if old Kellermann gets here. And everybody be joyous and don't touch Evelyn's sore spot!"

We all laughed and were happy. And Dave surrounded Evelyn like a cloud.

At about this moment a strange man pushes open the door, without even knocking, and, making signs with his hands, says:

"Who's sick here? Wounded? What man of you's dying?"

"No one!" yells Dave, laughing, and happy. "Who the devil are you? Don't you know there's a wedding going on, not a funeral? Behave."

He doesn't answer, but looks us over like he was counting us, sees the happiness, makes signs which no one understands, but which looks like the Knight's chart, then turns away. We were going to follow him, when a soft

sound made us all turn. Evelyn was just crumpling to the floor in a faint.

"Of course!" cries Dave. "It's our fault—to let her come down as weak as this! And then have this fool come in and frighten her!" He would have killed the man if he hadn't got out quick.

We carries her back to bed.

"Daddy," she says, when we were alone, "they are still after Mallory. They think he is well again—or never has been sick, or has lied or deserted. Once a spy, always a spy—or you are shot. And there's no tapestry to weave and unweave now! I thought it was all over! But it must be done again, I expect. You must help me, daddy, dear. I'm too sick to do it alone this time."

"The wedding will stop all that," I said.

"Ah, the wedding," she sighed. "Dave must know now. And, when he knows, do you think—there will be a wedding?"

"Why not?" says I.

"Why not? Would you marry me, daddy,

if you were Dave, remembering what you know and he doesn't?"

Well, that kind of gets me. I really hadn't thought about it that way.

"We said the other day that we would do it," Evelyn goes on, "when we were all happy and thoughtless. But—we all know that Dave must—understand."

I said nothing. I couldn't. And I suppose that hurt Evelyn's feelings a little.

"Tell him very gently and sweetly," she says then, "that it can not be yet. Say that I am too ill."

And, after a while:

"Perhaps you had better tell him—all. It will have to be done—some time. I mustn't let him marry me under false pretenses."

But I couldn't make up my mind to cause all that unhappiness—just yet. I waited, hoping that something would happen to make it unnecessary. And Evelyn slowly got her courage back—but not like the night she was shot. She never got *that* back.

XXIX

THE LAST DAY

WELL, Kratz had certainly kept us busy drilling and parading, and electing officers as fast as they backed out, and getting uniforms made, and hearing speeches, till it seemed like there were no rebels about any more. I suppose another company could have been raised easy after they saw us drill and parade in our uniforms.

What the people that was left seemed to want now was everything that was Union.

And everybody who wasn't going to fight was just crazy for *us* to hurry right on to Richmond and end the war and reduce the cost of pork. But I must say, for one, that I wasn't as crazy to take Richmond as I had been. We knew now that it was dangerous. But I don't back out of a game, once I am in it.

We had it all arranged that Dave and the hireland, with a little help from Betsy, could keep the farm on top of the earth for the little time Jon and I would be away.

We had an idea that when we got to fighting the war would be a matter of months.

And so came the last day before we moved. Dave was as gay as ever, and still thought of it as a picnic. He made a kind of farewell address to Jon and me—from him and Evelyn. There was both poetry and Scripture in it. Then he talked in a funny way about the red roses Evelyn wore in her cheeks—called them Lancaster roses—and gave Jon and me a bunch of white ones out of the ones that Evelyn wore —which he called York roses. I didn't know much about that business of York and Lancaster roses, except that it had nothing to do with those towns over in Pennsylvania, but some old-time business off in England. Yet, under it all, I saw that Dave was sorry for us, and was just trying to keep up and keep us all up—on account of Evelyn, I expect. We

were in our full uniforms, for the first time, account Dave made us, and even wore our arms to supper! Dave made us stand up together now and then to look at us. And I begun to think he was crazy to be inside of a uniform himself.

"Look mighty glorious, don't they, Evelyn?" asks Dave.

"Yi—yes," says Evelyn, choking on some bread.

"Especially old Jon. Say, Jon, you been fooling us all the time. You weren't no farmer nor no student nor no preacher. You've been a soldier all the time! And now you're telling us the truth. By God, you'll give a good account of yourself down there!"

Well! Dave used all kinds of strange languages, but that's the very first time I ever heard him swear. We all jumped up, and, I think, we all got white. Evelyn looked like a ghost.

"Davy," says I, "don't you be worked up about Jon's patriotism. He's going on account

of a small aching void. And as soon as that's all filled up he'll be back."

Jon nearly kicked my shin off.

"Daddy," says he, "it's not a good time to be joking—just before we're going away. Dave knows what I am going for—patriotism."

"That's right, brother," says Dave, in a funny mood, reaching over and taking Jon's hands. "It's a thing I didn't think I owned—till to-night. But, by the Lord, if it wasn't too late, I'd get into a uniform myself. I may yet. It's a great thing to love your country well enought to die for it. God bless the Union forever! Hip, hip, hurrah!"

He begun serious and ended funny—as usual.

"Ah, Dave," says Jon, "you're forgettin' something better than your country."

Neither of them looked toward Evelyn, but both understood, and Dave goes over and touches her, almost as if she were a stranger.

"Yes," he says, dreamy, "I didn't think there

was anything on earth or in heaven could make me forget this and these and this—"

He puts his hands through her hair, touches her eyes, and kisses her. But it was plain to see that his thoughts were elsewhere.

"Isn't it strange," he goes on, "that I never thought of it till now! I really have had no convictions, rebel or Union, till now. It's good—oh, 'It's sweet and glorious for one's country to die.' That's a Latin quotation," he laughs at me.

I didn't know it then, but I know it now:

"O, carior et gloria est pro patria mori."

Evelyn knew it and found it for us.

"Evelyn," says Dave, sitting half on the arm of her chair and half on her, "something inside, here, is drawing me to the army. I know now what has kept the ranks full notwithstanding the pine boxes we see at the station so often now. They had the good fortune to feel when they enlisted as I do to-night. Don't you think I'd better go, dear? Don't you want to send me? Don't you want a soldier?"

She didn't hesitate a minute.

"Yes, Dave," she says, "go," shivering.

But I chimes in:

"Who d'you think is going to take care of her—and the farm? If Jon and me'd known that you were so crazy to go we'd have stayed at home and left you go. Why didn't you speak up sooner? Now *you* got to stay at home. Evelyn *daren't* be left alone."

Evelyn thanks me with her frightened eyes, and Dave lets out a great sigh.

"All right, daddy," he says, "all right."

"You'll get over that feeling in your breast. If not before, as soon as the first shell drops behind you. They say that's an awful scare—to be smiling and suddenly have to change your face. Don't try it. I'll tell you all about it."

Dave turns away as if he had forgotten Evelyn, and she looks after him as if she didn't know what had come over him.

She seemed, somehow, to have been deserted by all of us!

"Jon," says Evelyn, choking, "I want to talk to you!"

And out she goes to the seat under the plums.

Jon looks round at us a moment in wonder at it all. Dave goes on:

"To-night, somehow, when I see you and daddy in your uniforms, ready to be sacrificed —that comes close home—when your father and your brother are ready to march to the firing line. I wish to God you hadn't enlisted. I am the one to go. I really have a feeling of hatred for the South to-night for taking you from me. And as you see, I am really the one in the family who has the most pronounced views on the war. Look here, slip off your uniform. We are of about the same size. We look enough alike. They won't know the difference. Let me go in your place! Honest! I'm fighting-crazy, too. I want to go. I've got to go!"

"Dave," I says, nodding after Evelyn, "that hurts her. And what's the use? It's too late. She has trouble of her own. Don't make it worse. She needs protection—needs it bad."

Jon takes Dave, very quiet, by the shoulders, and when he has him eye to eye, he says:

XXX

THE SACRIFICE

WE could hear Evelyn crying and raving and Jon's voice, deep and kind and persuading. Up and down, up and down. It had an effect upon Dave. At first he just looked at me—not through me—with his face between his hands. That was wonderful, too—to see a son of yours who has only laughed, so far, with his first wo in his young face. At last, with a sigh, his eyes left me and saw nothing. But I noticed a slow change in him. His eyes grew wide, his nostrils stiffened, he drew his breath between his teeth. He was at the open window hearing what Jon and Evelyn were saying. For, even I, considerably further away, could hear a good deal of it, but not enough to make sense—which

must have carried to Dave. Finally, as if he understood something for the first time, he swelled up, then relaxed and let his head droop to his arms on the table. Jonathan talked louder and louder, and Evelyn was almost shrieking now. For a while I thought it was all on account of our going.

At that time it came to me in small bits which made no sense—what they were saying out there. Afterward I understood it well. It is that I tell you now—not exactly what disjointed phrases came to me at the time, but the completed conversation as time and after-events made it.

They had talked about those past days between them before Dave came home, the joy and the sorrow of them.

Now she was telling—had told—Jon all—all that she had made me swear to keep secret.

She knew the strange man who had looked in the door—and the signs he made. He was an officer of the Knights. He had seen that Dave, who was thought to be Mallory, was not

sick, never had been. Dave, himself, had said so. Dave would be thought to have deceived them with the pretense of illness. Mallory must, at once, prove his apparent faithfulness, disappear from here and turn up in Stuart's cavalry or run the risk of the secret silent "execution" the Knights visited upon deserting spies.

"And, Jon, dear, I am so sick! I shall die on the way. And no one will know it. I shall lie in the woods and rot and never reach Stuart—and Dave will still be in danger, for he will still be here, and he, not I, is thought to be Mallory. Nothing I can now say will change that. No one will believe me. They know Mallory only as a man. And it must be —to-night. The signs said so. So, you must help me across the line. I can not reach there alone. You can still return in time to join your command if we start now. You know the password. I have my uniform. I'll put it on."

And she must have started away.

"Wait—wait!" says Jon. "Something *must*

be thought of—done—but not that. I am bewildered—crazy. I can't think yet. Wait! No—not a word to Dave. If he knew *he* would go—oh, yes!—go as Mallory. I know Dave! For *that* would mend all!"

"That," says Evelyn, "is why I must go now. Only when I die on the way, as I am sure to do without you, don't you see that I have helped nothing? Mallory will still be here in the person of Dave."

"I see," says Jon.

"That is what you must think of—if you can't go with me. How my death will—can be made—to cancel all. Do you think it can? If *you* were not going away, too, you could tell them—swear that I am Mallory—let them find me—dead—"

"God!" says Jon.

"God—" repeats Evelyn. "Yes—they must find Mallory. But then they'd know that I was not he—that I—I am—was—"

"A woman!" says Jon. "They would uncover your body—touch it with loathsome

fingers—laugh—your dead eyes would be staring up at them—your lips would be smiling—your mouth—your hair would be fallen damply over your face—yes, they would laugh at their mistake and go away and let you lie for the carrion birds—and even then Dave would not be saved!"

"Stop!" shrieks Evelyn. "What's to be done—what's to be done? I can not go. I dare not die. Daddy? " she whispers at last very low.

"No!" thunders Jon. "He deserves least of all to be the sacrifice. He has had least of you. And they wouldn't believe *him* a traitor."

"Then who—Jon, dear, will go as Lucas Mallory? Some one must—for Dave's sake!"

"I," says Jon.

"Oh, my poor Jon—my poor old Jonthy! To think—No, no! Let me die. It will be best that way."

"That way," says Jon, as if through his closed teeth, "accomplishes nothing but your death. The trouble is still there. You dare not

die. That much is certain. Mine is the only way."

There was another silence, and then Jon went on:

"You will tell them that I am Mallory. That I shall go with my men to the Union front. Then I shall—"

It was a long time before anything more was said.

"I have the courage now for the word! Desert! When we are before Stuart I will desert to him and enlist as Mallory. Tell them so."

He hurried it all out terribly as if he was afraid he'd never get it out otherwise.

"That is what you must tell them with the code to-night. That I, a Union captain, am leading my men toward the Confederate front so that I can step over to them. That I am—that—kind—of a—Union man! God Almighty! God, God Almighty!"

"Oh, my poor Jon—my poor old Jonthy!" sobbed Evelyn again.

"Peace," says Jonathan, more quiet now. "It is decided."

"Signal to-night yet," says Jon, "the last signal, that Lucas Mallory has gone to join Stuart. To look for him there."

"Yes," says Evelyn, "and after the war is over, soon, soon, then I will not seem so bad. I shall confess—in his arms. Some things which are tragic now we shall be able to laugh at then. Then, we'll tell him and I'll take my chances with him—but not now. I'm too sick. I should die telling him, seeing his eyes flame."

We could hear her break down in sobbing. And, then, Jon:

"Kushy, kushy," he half sung, "you are not well enough for such terrible emotions. Kushy, kushy!"

Then there was pleading and promising about something I couldn't hear.

"Yes, yes, yes," says Jon, as if he were pronouncing his own death sentence, "that is better—my treason—than Dave's—and your

separation—better than that you should die. I have decided. There is no other way. Be at peace."

Then there was some talk which just missed reaching me, but which, I think, reached Dave. I turned to catch it better; I heard—barely heard—old Jon say:

"Then, so it shall be. We will be within touch of the Confederate lines in less than a week. Then! But, I mean my brother to have what I am buying for him at such a fearful price. Do you understand? Will you play fair now? He *must* have *you!*"

"I understand," says Evelyn. "And I *will* play fair, hereafter. It won't be long, dear Jon, the war is almost over. Then all will be right. There will be no Unions or rebels—or treason—only us—always together!"

"Then, I am ready to say good-by. I shall probably never look upon your face again. After to-night I shall probably never look upon that of my brother. Let me see you for the last time on earth."

Then a silence.

"My God!" I heard Jon say, and, then again, "my God! Who would think that *you* —beautiful, wonderful—you could be the cause—"

I closed my eyes and could imagine Jon looking into that face which could be so wonderful, as he turned it to the moon.

And, then, suddenly, I turned upon Dave—something made me do it—and such a Dave I had never seen before. *Ach!* It's wonderful what an effect the mind has upon the body—and so quick!

XXXI

THE COST—WHO PAYS

AS I have said, I didn't really know what was going on outside. Just a word here and there. When my wits got to work right, afterward, and things happened, I knew it—as I have told it. But then I didn't. It was all a confused mass of words. So, I couldn't quite see why Dave should act so queer—except that we were all in a strained humor that night—nothing was natural.

He was sitting up straight, now, and looking through me. His face was like a ghost, with his eyes wide and burning in the midst of it. It seemed to me that I had never seen anything so awful as my own son just then. Him we thought of only lately as a baby. Little Dave! And as he looked, I felt myself becoming spell-

bound, as the brauchs do when they witch-craft one. I couldn't open my mouth, nor stir a hand or foot. What do you think of that? And yet it's true.

I think it must have been ten minutes before I shivered and the sweat poured out and the spell broke. But that was, maybe, because Dave had changed his thoughts. That is the way with a brauch.

"What have you heard?" asks Dave, pointing outward. And I hardly knew his voice.

"Just a word here and there," answers I. "I don't know whether it's quarreling or loving or hell. I got to put it together first."

"It's nothing," says Dave, "don't put it together and don't think of it again—nothing—nothing—nothing!"

But he shrieks the last word, and laughs like he's going crazy.

"Dave, what's up?" I asks him. "You sick? Shall I ride for the doctor?"

Still nothing but the white face and the flaming eyes and the hoarse laughter for another ten minutes. We could still hear the two

voices outside. But I don't think either of us noticed much what was being said then.

Then Dave let out a long shivering sigh, still sitting up straight, the tears running down the white face. No laughing now. I was glad for the tears!

"Daddy," says he, "you ought have told me that Jon loved Evelyn before I came—you haven't played fair with me, daddy—not any of the three of you."

I tried to lie.

"It wasn't much between them, Davy," says I. "I don't think it amounted to anything—for sure."

"Ah, yes! If I had only stayed away with my habit of taking things that don't belong to me!"

He flung out his hands, in agony, toward the plum trees!

"Poor old Jonthy! Poor old Jonthy! I wouldn't have taken her from you for all the world! I didn't know, Jonthy, I didn't know! I would have cut my own heart out first! The one great thing in your dear life!"

"Kushy, Davy," says I to him, like when he was a baby. "Jon knew you didn't know. And he was glad—glad. She was so lovely that he—well, he wanted you to have her."

"Yes! And so did you—it has been with Evelyn like everything else since I was born. I was to have her. She was for me! No matter who else wanted her or was hurt! And *she knew!* Daddy, she knew and let me do this to Jon! I wish I could understand *that!* Do you, do you, daddy?"

"Davy," says I, "although she knew up here, at the head, like all women know when a man's foolish about her, especially when the man has told them, yet she didn't know it down here, at the heart. There was too little of it, especially after you came, when immediately she didn't know anything but you down below. That's it. And it was just as too late then as now. If she had told you, you would have gone away from her. And she loved *you.* Can you blame her? It was too late after the first minute!"

"But *you* knew, daddy, dear, and let it go

on day by day! Ah, you have the same excuse. But Jon! What must Jon think of me! Of course *he* wouldn't tell!"

I shook Dave until he listened.

"How often must I tell you," I yells, "that we all knew that you *didn't* know!"

"And was I too worthless to be protected against myself, daddy?"

"I don't understand that," I said.

"Ah, well," says Dave, "no matter that. It is the smallest part—me. But the cost! That must be looked after. Who pays? The cost—the cost! Am I to take her and let Jon pay the price?"

We just stared at each other for a long while.

"Daddy," yells Dave, "answer. Am I to take the woman and let Jon pay her price; do what she demands?" He points out to them.

"I don't know what you mean, Davy," says I, as kind as possible. "Of course, you got the woman and you've got to pay—whatever there is to pay. I don't know what it is."

"Yes!" says Dave, "I have got to pay! I took the goods—no matter that I got them like a thief in the night—I have got to pay for the stolen goods! By the Lord, I will!"

Then, after a good while, he changed back to the old way.

"Daddy," he says, very soft, "I've not been a good son to you. No, no, no! There is no use in saying that I have been. I see it all in this moment of revelation. I have been pleasant to you—gay—laughing—happy. But, ah, that is far from making a good son of any one. In fact, when I look back, I am obliged to confess that I have been no good to any one. I have just crowded every one else aside so that I might go laughing and happy through the world myself. Well, there always comes a day of reckoning for such. Mine is here. I think God means me to even up with the rest of my life. Well, He shall. I am willing. I must be."

"Why, Davy," says I, "what talk! You have kept my old heart bright and happy ever since

you were born. Ain't that something? And Jon wouldn't be anything without you. Honest! Jon's like the Siamese twins with you. Yes, Davy, I begun to have fun with you before you were a week old. You was such a comical little chap. And you were, really, all I had to have fun with. Your mother was dead, and Jon was too solemn. Why, Jon was nearly as old then as he is now. Davy, I wouldn't have you changed one jot or tittle. You were a sunbeam in a dark place. You have always been. I know you always will be."

"A sunbeam, daddy!" says Dave, with the glad light in his eyes once more.

"Yes, a sunbeam! I am not afraid to repeat it. A sunbeam! More than one! Don't you be so worked up about—ahem—us going to war. There's not much danger if you don't fool with the guns more than you have to. We'll get back all right. And, about Evelyn—Dave, you marry her. She loves you—that's as plain as a haystack. You love her—that's as plain as a red barn"—trying to be funny.

Dave got almost gay again, he thought me so funny.

"'If I love her
As she loves me,
No knife can cut our love in three!'"

he sings—erroneously.

"That sounds better," says I. "You marry her. She needs it—to be tamed. No woman is tamed till she's married. Look at your mother! Why, she often thanked me for making her meek. And you got a way of taming horses that'll go well with Evelyn. First the spur, then the bit, and, when she's up in the air, the whip—hard. That tells 'em who is master!"

Just to cheer him up a little more. But it is not much use. Down into the dumps he goes.

He was quiet again, for a while, and the voices outside died down. Then, all changed, he says:

"That was nice of you—to call me a sunbeam, daddy—very nice. I'll never forget it.

Don't you. A sunbeam in a dark place, you said. A dark place! I might have been worse, I expect. Do you think it's too late to begin to be better now?"

"You suit me," I answers, "just as you are—and everybody else, I expect. It would spoil you to be better. The world needs just such gay fellows as you, Davy, to counterbalance such as Jon and me."

"Ah, daddy," says Dave, "you're a flatterer—an arrant flatterer! I'm afraid you love me. And those we love—we never see their faults. We just—love 'em! And, I suppose, that is why love is blind. So that the faults mayn't outweigh the rest."

He turns a bit toward the voices, which are only a murmur now, as if everything was settled, and then he repeats:

"No, we never see the faults of those we love. We just love 'em! Like a sunbeam in a dark place! Well, daddy, sunbeams are welcome after bad weather. But how soon we forget that they are all about us when the bad

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"No, we never see the faults of those we love. We just love 'em! Like a sunbeam in a dark place! Well, daddy, sunbeams are welcome after bad weather. But how soon we forget that they are all about us when the bad

weather is over! And so, daddy, dear, for fear that you'll forget that I was a sunbeam once, I am going to *do* just one good thing—the only good thing I have ever done—the best thing I have ever done, the first best thing, a thing you won't forget! Did you ever think that I could make a sacrifice, daddy? Me, Dave?"

"Well, Davy," says I, "you've had about everything you asked for, and you haven't paid heavy for it. I suppose it's our fault—the way we brought you up. But, I like it that way and I'm willing to go on."

"I never did yet! I've never given anything up! Maybe I can't. It's a fearful thing to learn!" he sort of whispers to himself. "But it must—it must be rain with sunshine! Tears with smiles. Things won't grow else!"

"What does tears make grow, I'd like to know?" I asks.

"Ah, daddy! What do tears make grow? Ask me when you see me again and I can tell you that—to the last terrible item! And then

—oh, daddy, dear, you'll like me better than ever! Oh, you'll see what tears make grow!"

It was all hard for me to put together, but I understand, dimly, that this boy, born for joy, was looking out upon sorrow—something he had never known and wasn't fitted for.

"Davy," I says, "stop the riddles and tell me what you are going to do. The times are out of joint. Don't make things worse."

"I know and you'll know—all in good time, daddy," says Dave, very thoughtful. "The poor rebels—poor Johnny rebs—sure to get licked—and nothing to eat—nothing to wear—and plenty of fighting—there's not much fun in that—you must—forgive—a—poor Johnny reb!"

"Not on your life!" says I, hard as iron. "I'll not forgive any rebel. This old roof won't harbor none. Every timber in it was cut on free soil with free white hands. Every nail in it means Union. And all of 'em together means *'E Pluribus Unum!'* Any rebel's got to get from under mighty quick."

"But, suppose he was pressed in?" asks Dave. "Every day there are men pressed into the army from this neighborhood, some of them almost as good as we are. Suppose he couldn't help it?"

"Davy," says I, "you been away and you don't know the news. There's no one pressed in nowadays."

"Yes, there is, daddy," answers Dave, nice and soft.

"Well, then," says I, a little angry, "I expect it's me that don't know the news. I haven't heard of it hereabouts. Anyhow, this house refused to shelter Tories in the Revolution, but opened all its doors and windows to General George Washington; and do you think I'll allow the same walls to hide a rebel?"

"General George Washington was a rebel himself," says Dave, solemn as an owl.

Which, when you come to think of it, is certainly true.

"Well," I says, a little confused, "that was different. A rebel who succeeds in his rebellion it not a rebel. These rebels won't. Washing-

ton fought for freedom. They are fighting for slavery. How do you expect 'em to win?"

"Anyhow, daddy, if you had to have a rebel," says Dave, "you'd rather have him in a butternut uniform than a blue one?"

"Why, of course," says I, "a rebel in a Union uniform is—well, you know what he is. We shoot 'em on sight."

"Don't they—if it's the other way with the uniform?" asks Dave.

"I expect they do," says I, "though we don't hear much of their doings."

For a while Dave just sits there and smiles. Then he says in that soft way he had:

"There is Evelyn under this Union roof!"

"Oh," says I, "she's a woman and don't count—except fool-talk that gets others crazy! Is *that* what you're thinking of?"

"But, daddy, the roof will always give her shelter?"

"Why, of course," says I. "And a spanking now and then!"

We smiled together, and then Dave's eyes fell out of mine.

After some silence he says:

"Daddy, you ought to have told me!"

"Told you what?" I asks.

"That Jon loved—"

"That again!"

He sees me flare up and comes and puts his hand over my mouth, getting on his feet like an old man.

"Sh! Sh! It's not too late to make things right—some of them. Daddy, I'm sleepy! Don't wake me. Let me lie as late as I want. And tired—yes, actually tired! I've done nothing but loaf all my life—yet I'm tired. I never was so tired since I was born. Now, what do you think of that! Well—good-by, daddy."

"Good-by? You mean good night, not?"

Dave laughs and says:

"I'm thinking of morning to-night."

"Yes, that's so," says I, with a feeling in my breast. "We got to go to-morrow! And early!"

He didn't seem to be thinking of that.

"It is good to sleep when you are tired—so very tired! Mother! I'm thinking of my

mother to-night! I never knew her, did I, daddy?"

"No," says I, choking up. "But Jon did."

"Yet I know, too, what she was—I know all about her to-night for the first time. Now, isn't that queer? And I'm glad. There are only a few women of whom we can say that, daddy, dear. Well, it's hard, but good-by!"

He had reached the stairs, and standing on them, flung me a kiss, like girls do to each other, half gay, half sad. He looked sorrowfully down at me a long time, then flung another. I can see him now as I close my old eyes! Handsome as young David in the Bible, with things written in his face I had never seen there before. And a strange thought came into my head—for no especial reason—for, I have admitted my dullness—Evelyn. He had said to her that day he came home, that she might teach him what sorrow was. I wondered if it was beginning now. Whether she was concerned in my son's strange mood.

"Davy," I says, as pleading as I could, just

as when he was three years old, "tell your anxious old daddy what's the matter—what are you going to do?" and held out my arms—so.

My Dave smiled, almost as of old, hesitated a little, then came down and we put our arms about each other and hugged, just like when he was a little boy. And we talked nearly as we used to talk then—baby talk!

"I love you, daddy," Dave said, and rubbed his soft cheek close against mine—impulsive like.

"I love you more, Davy," I said.

"You can't prove it," laughs Dave. "I can."

"Let's see your proof," says I.

"In the morning," says he. "And, then, tell Jon about to-night. For, we both love him more! I'll prove it in the morning."

We just held each other a while, and looked into each other's eyes. He had scared me.

"Davy," I says, "when you *were* little and we talked baby talk, you told me everything. Don't have a secret from me now. Why are you so strange? What are you going to do?"

He whispers in my ear:

"I'm going without Evelyn—leaving her to Jon!"

"Going where?"

"To—bed."

"Oh!" I says, thinking at last, I sees it all. "Well, that's nice of you, Davy. You'll have her all your life. This is Jon's last night with her. It might be their last night on earth together!"

"Stop it!" Dave shrieks, and closes my mouth. But then, soon, he smiles again. "Daddy, we both feel just like I was little again to-night. Let's kiss each other—like we used to then!"

And we did—holding each other's hands a long time. Then Dave starts up the stairs again. He stopped two or three steps up and sang me a little song—quite like the old Dave:

"'Tis many days since I left home,
To join the gallant army—
I thought but of my country's cause—
And the girl I left behind me!'"

He flung me another kiss, then two or three in a bunch, and went away, up the stair, like a man of eighty.

He had put but a few steps between us. But it seemed, even then, like an eternal parting.

XXXII

ON DAVE'S BED

WHEN Jon came in we held a consultation of war and decided that we wouldn't disturb Dave. For the first time in his life Jon seemed glad not to have Dave about. And he had a wild look about the eyes that I had never seen on Jon.

He went out and told Evelyn not to wait for Dave, that he had gone to bed.

"Yi—you didn't tell him?" I heard her shriek, "You didn't?—He didn't guess it?"

"He had gone some time before I went in," Jon said. "Come! We will meet in the morning! Come."

Jon dragged her in and she flew off to bed like a troubled spirit.

"Come, Jonthy," says I, "let's sleep—if we

can. Seems to me that we're all crazy in one way or another, to-night."

"Well, daddy," says Jon, with his patient smile, putting his arm over my shoulders and leading me off, "we are all suffering from to-morrow!"

And then the wildness all went out of his eyes.

"Daddy," says Jon, "could you hear us out there?" He motions toward the trees. "Sometimes we both forgot and talked pretty loud."

"I heard a great deal, Jonthy," I says, "but I can't figure out what it was—yet."

And I didn't—as I have said, much of what I have told you here—until long, long afterward. I suppose I have told you more or less as it should run. But that is bad—and you must fix it for yourself a bit. It took years of thinking and happening for some of the things to become plain. And the places where things fit in now and make all clear, were vacant then, and nothing was clear.

Jon seemed relieved by what I said, and he asks, also:

"Did Dave hear anything?"

"Not much more than I did; his ears are no better than mine, I expect," I answers. "Though he behaved funny, and, as you see, went off to bed without saying good night to you and Evelyn. But he's so sorry about us going to war. He was at the open window."

Jon is scared a bit about that and asks:

"Are you sure—sure he went to *bed?*"

"Sure," says I.

"What did he say?" asks Jon, still more scared—and more and more as he went on.

I told him.

"Why, don't you see—don't you see what that means?" yells Jonathan. "He heard—heard all."

"No, I don't," says I—and I didn't—then.

"Come!" he says, rushing up the stairs, "I want to see whether he's in *bed.* I must!"

It was strange that Jon, when we reached

Dave's door, stopped first to listen whether he was sleeping—just like when he was a baby—and didn't listen at Evelyn's like he use' to. Do you suppose that he didn't like her any more?

But he wasn't satisfied with what he heard—or didn't hear—at Dave's door. He beckoned me to listen, too. I had done that often; but I heard nothing now.

"He's not there!" says Jon, kind of crazy. "He's gone South."

"Dave, are you asleep?" I whispers. "Are you asleep?"

"Sure! Tight!" laughs Dave. "Go to bed, you loafers!"

But Jon burst the door open like mad and stood breathless in the room, looking all about for something he didn't see, as if he were facing something awful.

"I thought—at first—you weren't here—" he gasps.

But Dave only laughs and pulls us both down on his bed.

I suppose you have seen the bedroom of some such shustle as our Dave. Everything on the floor—so's you had to step careful not to damage collars and cuffs and so on.

Well, Jon looks all about among these things, like he was hunting for some sign, though he had seen Dave's things there many a time. Anyhow, he didn't find what he was looking for, and he seemed glad of it.

"Dave," he says, "why did you go off to bed without saying good night to Evelyn?"

"Jealous," laughs Dave. "You're rather nice, Jonthy."

"Honest?" asks Jon, kind of glad.

"Well, wouldn't you go off to bed in a huff if I'd had your girl out under the trees for a couple of hours?" says Dave.

"Yes—yes, I expect I would," says Jon soft and nice. "But it was necessary—some things about the farm had to be arranged before our going away."

"I forgive you," laughs Dave. "But don't do it no more. You're mighty nice, Jonthy."

"I won't," says Jon, solemn. "And will you make it up with Evelyn the first thing in the morning?"

"Depends on who's up first," says Dave. "Maybe she'll make it up with me."

"Yes—yes, of course," says Jon, absent-minded. "Dave, you'll marry her—soon?"

"Jon, it's the lady fixes the day," says Dave. "I have tried to do it—"

"But, you'll stay right here—she'll fix the day—no matter—married or not—and see that Evelyn and the old farm are taken care of. I don't think daddy and I will be away over a couple of weeks. The war is about ended."

"Look here," says Dave, "if you don't want any sleep, I do. It would please me very much to give you both an affectionate good night! To-morrow's going to be an awful day."

"Yes," says Jon—but he didn't move. Just sat there fascinated like a snake, never taking his eyes off of Dave. Dave did all the talking —or rather laughing—making game of the war and soldier business.

At last he says:

"Now, good-by, and off to bed with you. The war's over. I'll see you both back here in a week. Unless you get a telegram to-morrow to stay at home."

But, when we want to say good-by Dave refuses and says:

"In the morning—in the morning! Don't forget! In the morning. It's night now. Remember the morning! And, daddy, you tell Jonthy about the sunbeam!—In the morning."

So, laughing, he pushes us out of the door.

Just as it closed on us I thought I heard that agony of Dave's as I had heard it down-stairs.

And Jon must have heard it, too—or thought so. For he turns and grabs the knob to go in again. But just then the key turns and we hears Dave laugh.

"Now, go along, will you?"

And we did—Jon saying:

"It's hard on Dave—for us to go. Harder than on us."

XXXIII

TO THE FRONT

THE next morning we got up early, Jon and I, and decided not to disturb Dave and Evelyn. It was too hard on 'em. But we listened again at Dave's door. Jon said he heard breathing. I didn't. In fact, I thought Jon mistook the breathing of Evelyn, next door, for that of Dave. He said *he* didn't hear that.

And soon everything was the war we were going to!

It looked really like war on the Square when we were assembled—that is, what I thought up to that time war was. There were new uniforms, glittering swords and bayonets, and enough gold lace to sink a ship. I suppose even the privates might have had as much gold lace as they could pay for. As for the officers—

they looked like the sun, moon and stars, all mixed together. And, you know, Jonathan was captain! How handsome he looked! He wore yeller leggins, red baggy britches, a little blue jacket with the gold all over it, a red cap with a long white tassel, and a red flannel shirt all embroidered. He carried his sword in a big white sash around his waist.

Most of the uniforms was made by the zouaves' sweethearts and had everything but ruffles on 'em. But we hadn't had the courage to ask Evelyn to make ours—she was busy enough with her own clothes.

Well, we all stood up in two ranks, that way —straight as a tape line! Jon was out in front, with me and Kratz and three or four lieutenants, and so on. The privates was mighty lonely, sometimes, amongst all us officers, I expect. They were a good deal scared that they might call some one sergeant who was lieutenant and get court-martialed and shot. But they were careful and it never occurred.

Yes, it looked like war that morning! At

least, more like it than anything I had seen up to that time. They were, mostly, youngsters with savage apple-cheek faces, thinking it all a grand picnic. And yet, God help us, I have seen some of those apple-cheeked boys come home with long whiskers and hair, pale and thin, on three legs, two of them wooden. And some I have seen come home to the *Dead March.* Some haven't come yet!

There is a poor old widow down the road here, whose only son, just cut from her apron string, stood beside me that Sunday morning at Chancellorsville, looking and behaving like a play soldier—just a red-cheeked, tow-headed chap, so high! She had told me to watch out for him and bring him back to her, that he was all she had to offer to Father Abraham. He was captain by then—for gallantry. Not in zouave uniform, but a faded one that might be any color. Well, the artillery opened and we were ordered forward. He went in at the head of his men, his little blue cap on the point of his sword, yelling like a young demon. The

smoke of the cannons covered him from my sight—and I haven't seen him since. The poor old widow has his picture in the zouave uniform always by her.

It's a grown-up baby—long yellow curls, dimples, that smile the photographer puts on you, leaning on the back of a carved chair, with one leg across the other, his gun in the hollow of his arm, his red cap on the back of his head, as if he didn't care how soon they called on him to march to Richmond and put a stop to the war. This picture is all painted and it looks like a pretty toy soldier. I'm afraid to touch it when she shows it to me for fear I'll rumple him. Well, that morning at Chancellorsville he had a beard of yellow whiskers half a yard long, hiding the dimples, and all he had on wouldn't have made the ragman any richer. And, every now and then, she still asks me when I think he'll be home! You see, I was his keeper because I was older and wiser! But I suppose he was really wiser than I was. Come home! That's the trouble with others. Many!

Come home! It's like a cannon ball in my breast. Why, she don't seem to know, like we do, that it's fifty years! Nor that, if he should come, he would be an old man. She thinks of him with that baby face and dimples, in that zouave uniform!

Sometimes I shake my head and say:

"Mother, it's a long, long time!"

But that doesn't phase her. She answers:

"Yes. But he'll come. He's a good boy. He knows I am waiting. He knows he is all I have. So I keep his bed ready made up, and his plate at the table, so that when he comes it will all be as it was—everything ready for him."

Only a little while ago she took to her bed. Then a little interrogation-point came in the dim blue eyes when she asked me. And the form of the question was:

"Don't you *think* he'll soon come?"

No, I don't. For I saw him disappear close upon the enemy's guns that Sunday morning.

And it breaks my heart—but I tell her yes! For how do I know—who, also, wait?

Well—excuse me!—it was a flag presented to the company, and a sword to Jon; both of which he received like a soldier—with a few words. I never could think of those men down in Virginia, both Union and Confederate, who made long speeches and "proclamations" as real fighting soldiers.

"For the flag," says Jon, up on a store box they brought him, "I thank you, friends, more than for the sword. That is our country. I think I speak for every man behind me when I say that we shall do our best to keep it—and, when we are through with it, bring it back to you as it goes forth. With this over my head I feel, for the first time, my responsibility. As to this sword—I am frank to say that I shudder at thinking of my hand driving it through the living body of a fellow man and turning him into a corpse. I shall honestly try to bring it back unstained with blood. It is

our brothers we are fighting. In the name of my company, I salute and thank you."

They didn't quite like that speech. Every one else had talked about hurrying to dye their flags and swords with blood. But here was old Jon telling them that he wanted to keep them from the stain of brothers' blood. I know he was thinking of Tankoo. So was I.

However, there was no time to think much. Jon gave the word to fall in—four ranks—and that looked so much like going, at last, that the cheering stopped, and after a silent solemn moment we were swamped by women. Every man had at least one woman hanging on him and crying—except just Jon and me.

The mothers were the most pitiful. Mostly they just held their red-cheeked boys off at arm's length and filled their eyes, as if they knew it might be the last, then hugged 'em close.

They couldn't get the women out of the ranks even to get our pictures taken. That's why that funny picture of the company seems all women and no soldiers.

In fact, even as far as the train, you could hardly see the soldiers for the women running at the sides. And not all was sad. Some was gay and foolish. But not the sweethearts and wives and sisters and mothers! Mostly them that had no one in the company.

I pitied Jon, the way he looked toward the farm, and wished that Dave and Evelyn might wake up and miss us and come to give us good-by after all. I had the feeling, too, that maybe, we mightn't get back—and I wanted to see Dave and Evelyn once more.

Well, wishing makes things happen, don't it? By hokey, just then Evelyn rushes through the crowd and right up and flung her arms round Jon. Her eyes were red with crying and she was tired—half dead—having run all the way in from the farm—and not well yet. When she got her breath she says:

"Jon! Dave's gone! The black's gone! My uniform is gone! Dave *knows!*"

Jon seemed turned to stone—and it was as if he understood. But he could say nothing, not a word.

"Jon, do you hear?" shrieks Evelyn. "The black is gone! Dave's gone! My uniform is gone! He knows. He's gone—South!"

"I—hear!" says Jonathan.

"This is for you—from Dave's room."

She handed him a letter.

"He's done just what you said he would—gone South as Mallory to save *us!*"

While Jon reads the letter she raves on:

"In some way he knows—he knows all. What am I to do—Jon, what am I to do?"

Jon just looked at her.

"Jonthy, help me! Help a sinner to stop the consequences of her sin."

"Into the fire goes the dross, out of it comes the pure gold," says Jon with his eyes closed. "Through sorrow to joy—always!"

Jon had finished reading the letter. He stood and smiled down on Evelyn. The leave-taking was still going on, and no one noticed Evelyn and the captain much.

"How beautiful you are to-day!" says Jon.

"The beauty of truth! How much to be desired. This is *our* Evelyn!"

"I want you—I ask you—to stay with me—at home! I need—I must have some one—And then—and then—Dave will come back. He will always come where you are," says Evelyn. "But he will never again come where I am—unless you are there, too. And then—oh, and then—I'll keep you both! Please stay! I'm so lonely!"

Jon pushed the hair out of her eyes and looked long into her face.

"It is too late for that, sister, dear." And he points to his men. "Perhaps, God knows, that is His punishment upon both of us—that I must say and you must hear—that it is too late! Too late! For, in the great light which bursts upon me now, I see that we haven't played fair with Dave. He should have known all concerning himself that we knew. We are not his keepers. He is. And we should have left him to judge. Yes, this is God's own

punishment. For with all of us together, with love and forbearance, all—everything was possible—all might have been mended. But, now, with hate and misunderstanding between us, and separated to the four corners of the world—don't you see how much harder God has let us make our problem?"

"I see, yes!" whispers Evelyn. "I see—I see it now! Oh, if I had only seen—guessed that this might happen before! Yes, it is too late! All is too late! Jon, before you return I shall die."

And nice old Jon, seeing her agony, stopped his own and comforted her.

"But it is not too late, dear sister, for much else that will now come to pass. At first I was shocked, too. But now—I believe I'm glad. I was not meant for a traitor. I see—I see so far and so much beyond! This was meant to be as it is. I was to be a Union soldier. Let us accept it—and follow on to happiness."

"Happiness?" moans Evelyn.

"Happiness," says Jon, solemn. "Don't you

see that this was the only way to ultimate happiness? Dave knows—yes, now—but in a way that is easily capable of honorable correction. And the first step toward happiness is for me to go, precisely where I am going today—except that I go honestly—for that is toward Dave. It is fortunate that I must. Otherwise when you ask me to stay—ah! If I could I would. But these men—And you must not die, but live and hope and wait! For I am going now—not to fight—but to find Dave for you. To bring him home."

For a moment Evelyn could not say a word —only breathe hard. Then—

"Yes, go. Hurry!"

"Be happy," nods Jon. "I think God meant it so. God does work in a mysterious—yes, and beautiful—way His wonders to perform. Just think! All this sorrow, probably, that one woman may be made perfect! And that she might be my dear brother's wife, and my dear sister! That we may all be, finally, together. For, when I find Dave, and let him understand

all and ask him to return to you—fetch him—he will come—"

"Yes, yes, yes!" she screams. "Tell him to kill me for my wickedness—but to let me die in his arms. Hurry! I'll wait—alone for Dave! Swear that you will find him! Not only search, but *find!*"

"I swear," says Jon, kissing his new sword. "Otherwise, how could I come home to you? For, now, I *can* come back to you, too. I need not slink in the byways of the world among those who have deserted the cause they swore to die for. Doesn't that mean something to you?"

"Yes," sobs Evelyn.

"Aren't you glad that I can go for the country I love?"

"Yes."

"And come back to you a soldier of the Union—no matter how much we differ about the North and the South?"

"Yes."

"Remember, that though Dave is as Union

as I am, he hasn't enlisted and taken the oath, and he is really at liberty to join the Confederate side. Nothing can be said about it—except by us, who know that it isn't honest—done only for you—only for blessed you!"

Another long silence. Then Jon's soft voice went on—comforting:

"But, now, for the very last moment before we move on to the front, let us think of the home-coming! For the war is almost over. Why, we shall soon be all together again! And the scars of the war will heal, and we will all think alike before long, that it was good to preserve this Union! And you and Dave will be married! Think of it! There will be little Daves and Evelyns a-plenty! And we shall laugh—laugh at all we suffer to-day! Now, let me go! Send me forth to bring back our dear Dave! Smile! Let me remember that!"

She tried to do that. But such a sad old smile I never saw before.

"God bless you! And give him this—and this—and this straight from my lips!"

She kissed Jon three times.

I have seen my son in battle—wounded—defeated—retreating—victorious—but I have never seen him as worked up as by those three kisses.

Thank God the train whistled for us just then. We were late.

That was too much for poor old Jon. He staggers back among his men, muttering:

"Attention!"

Evelyn followed him.

"The letter, Jon! The letter!"

Jon crushed Dave's letter, and putting it in his shirt, shakes his head no.

"Not to see it?"

"For God's sake, go!" says Jon, pushing her out of the ranks. "When I come back and all is peace—then!"

Then, savage as a bull of Bashan, Jon cleared the women out and double-quicked us to the train. There were no officers with their swords in both hands, stepping backward. There was no "By-the-right-wheel, Forward—

March!" No turning like the spoke of a wheel. There was no spreading out all over the street. There was no left, left, left! The band had no time to finish *The Girl I Left Behind Me*. We raced off to war as if we were crazy to get there and the devil was behind us.

XXXIV

THE PITY OF IT

JON tried to keep his word to Evelyn—poking into all the rebel places he came to—getting into no end of trouble and danger—shot at and missed—as if the Lord was on his side—inquiring of every prisoner he met—but we never heard anything of Dave—or Mallory.

I was discharged before my time was up because of the loss of my arm at Chancellorsville. Jon stayed in "for the war". But really, to find Dave. He had no heart for the fighting—though when he fought it was as he did everything else; like a man. Yet he always cried over the men he killed and wounded—both Union and Confederate. And he'd send such of them as was possible home all packed in flowers—if it was summer and enough could

be found. Sometimes he'd send a little note in the coffin. Often it was nothing more than:

"This was a brave man!"

and sign his name and regiment.

And, more and more, as he saw the wonderful armies and organization of the Union, the pouring out of men and money from the North, the sure and steady march on to final victory in the war, did my old Jon want to stop it. Once I heard him talk to a young officer he had captured.

"I'm not going to keep you," he says. "You are too fine a boy to drag your life out at Fort Warren."

"Not going to keep me?" says the youngster, rubbing his handsome dark eyes. "Why, suh, you got the right to. You took me inside yo' lines. I don't demand, suh, to be let go."

"I'm going to let you go, all the same," says Jon. "Remember, I haven't put my hands on you yet, and, therefore, you are not precisely my prisoner. In a moment I will show you a

safe way out. But, do you mind a little talk first?"

"Why, n—no, suh," says the handsome young rebel, "though you Yankees are rather queer, aren't you?—to let a man go who has been inside your lines and seen—"

"You are not going to tell what you have seen," says Jon.

"Why am I not, suh?" says the rebel, very haughty.

"Because you are a gentleman—as any one can see—as most of you are."

"I promise nothin', suh!" says the captive.

"Certainly not," says Jon. "But—look here, I hope you will not go back to the army. Do as you please, of course. But if you have a mother or a sister or a sweetheart, give me your parol, voluntarily, and go back to them. Every man killed and wounded in this war from now on, will be nothing less than murder—"

"Why, suh?" demands the young Confederate.

"Because, from now on, it is absolutely certain that the Union will win."

"Excuse *me,* suh!" says the soldier.

"Why, my dear boy, we have twenty men to your one in the field now and more coming all the time. We have a thousand dollars to your one. We have now an army of more than a million of seasoned veterans instead of the greenhorns we began with. We have, at last, and the way has been long and fearful, found the right men to lead the armies."

"Suh," said the young soldier, "right is might and must prevail."

"My boy, even if you are right, you will be crushed, overwhelmed, by mere weight, if nothing else. And, if you are to be vanquished in the end, why not stop now and save the thousands upon thousands of young men like you who will yet be killed, for their mothers and wives and sweethearts? Go. Do as you like. I ask no promises. But, it would make me mighty glad to know that out of the slaughter which must yet be I had saved a fine boy like

you and sent him back to his—waiting mother."

"Suh," said the young Confederate, "I have never thought of it like that. I have heard no one speak of it like that. Suh, let me say that if I could, I would do just what you ask—go home to my mother, sisters and sweetheart. I have all of 'em. I am tired of this wah. We get on too slowly. But what would be said if I should go home? Not a friend in the So'th would ever speak to me again. I should be ostracized. A leper. Suh, it is my duty to stand by my comrades, right or wrong, until the last ditch is reached, then to die there. Wouldn't you?"

"No," shakes old Jon. "I would go home to-morrow if I could, no matter what mistaken fools might think. But *you*—I see and know what you will do because you are a brave boy—and I am sorry for it. Good-by. Perhaps, after all, a time may come when you will not think as you do now, but as I do, that you will be serving your comrades and your coun-

try best by doing what you can to stop a struggle, useless, and deadly, and bloody. Good-by."

"Suh," said the youngster, "I didn't know there were such men in the No'th. If the time ever comes that I can, with honah, do as you suggest, I will do so—and thanks to you!"

So they shook hands and parted.

As for me, I had seen enough of war to be glad to go limping home, pale and sick, a neighbor on each side of me, almost as sick and crippled as I. Ah, there was nothing in war as glorious as those thrills on the common, and that leaving, on the Square! I used to imagine that if I were killed or wounded the band would meet me at the depot when I got home, and there would be a carriage or a hearse draped in flags and filled with flowers. Maybe I thought of this when I used up my last month's wages sending a despatch to Simon Corbin and John Alloway telling them that I was out of the hospital, less an arm, and was coming home honorably discharged.

But if I did I was properly punished. There was no one to meet me but Simon and John and a few little boys. And, though we went through the town, three war-cripples, not more than a half dozen people came to their doors and looked at us. One or two came and shook hands.

I believe I was disappointed. I had taken in all the glory-talk, as well as the gratitude-notion, and I had thought, I am afraid, that I was doing something noble: first, in going to such a dangerous thing as war for my country and fellow men; second, in losing an arm for them —a material part of my body. But no one seemed to care very much. And I heard no one speak of courage, patriotism, or gratitude. All now cursed the war.

When the body has been fed too much of one kind of food it becomes indifferent to it. Perhaps the mind of our people had been fed too greedily upon the war. And, too, maybe there were too many who had paid more dearly than I for their devotion. Maybe, there were, now,

so few left behind that enthusiasm was impossible.

It was good to see and then to reach the peaceful battered old place again, and to put my face under the pump-spout while John and Simon pumped. Even though the farm looked like a ruin! It had not been long, but the cattle and horses had been taken, and if I hadn't arranged to have the old Jerry-horse I rode in the army, sent home to me, I wouldn't have had anything to pull the plow—even though there was little enough to plow.

And, worst of all, Evelyn was gone—Betsy didn't know where—just disappeared—like Dave. Well, I didn't know the old house was so big, nor could be so lonely. Everybody was gone, there seemed nobody about even the neighborhood. I sat out there on the porch, where I could see some one going by, now and then, nearly always.

The land hadn't been farmed since I went away. No crops were in and it was too late to put any in. Anyhow, what could I do—with

one arm and one cavalry horse? The hireland had been drafted and shot to death three days after being mustered in.

That was what the war meant to us—part of it—only a small part.

XXXV

HOME, SWEET HOME

AND so, as I was sitting on the porch, out there, one afternoon, and the old Jerry-horse was eating grass in the front yard, a couple of regiments of cavalry came up the road, just beyond, in command of a young colonel in a faded old uniform. When he got opposite he stopped and saluted like I was a major-general.

"God-a-mighty!" says I, putting on my glasses, "you're the first man who's acknowledge that I fought, bled and died—nearly—for the Union. Who are you? Wait! I want to shake hands!"

I salutes and runs down the yard, crazy for the Union the minute I sees the uniforms. When I got near, something, mostly the smile, I think, reminded me a little of Dave.

"Who are you?" I yells. "Not—God-a-mighty—not at last—Dave?"

"No," says the young officer, "only Jon."

And he gets down and hugs me and cries over my empty sleeve.

"Where do you come from? Where are you going? Can't you stay for dinner?" I asks altogether.

"No," Jon smiles. "We come from everywhere. We're pushing on to Hooker at Gettysburg. Orders are to get there to-night. There's likely to be a fight. We are paralleling Lee. As you know, he's on the way to Pennsylvania. After the fight I'll manage to get a little leave and come back for the dinner and a talk. So, daddy, dear, good-by."

He turns to get on his horse. I holds him fast.

"What about Dave?" I asked.

"Nothing," he shakes, and gets on his horse.

"Wait," I yells. "I can't stand this from my son—if he is a colonel. I must talk. God knows I don't get the chance often now.

Everybody's in the war—or dead. I'll ride along a mile or two."

Jon pulled up a little, and I jumped on the old Jerry-horse, just back from the mill, and rode with Jon right out in front.

Well, it was like old times, and the Jerry-horse spruced up and pranced along as if he were going to war again. He understood, the old Jerry-horse did.

"Jon," I says, "get me a saber."

"Nonsense," laughs Jonathan. "What do you want with a saber? You're incapacitated."

"Nothing," says I, "only it don't seem right without. I think the old Jerry-horse will behave better if he feels a saber on his ribs."

But the truth was that I was rambunctious—crazy to fight! Now what do you think of that!

Jon laughs and gets me a saber.

"Not for you," he says, "but for the old Jerry-horse!"

And, in fact, the horse understood, and

stopped his prancing and drew long breaths and snorted now and then, as if there was a battle near.

As we went on down the road, nearer and nearer to Excelsior, it seemed as if all the rebels of the earlier part of the war had disappeared and all were now Union. For the road became lined with people who wouldn't let us through till they had filled up our haversacks, canteens and bellies—with flowers in our buttonholes and hands. Why, they brought hot coffee in tubs! There were bushel baskets of fresh loaves! And, if you've never been a soldier you don't know what the smell of fresh bread and coffee is! Whisky was plenty, too, and cigars, and even clothes! Why, any man in a blue uniform had only to ask for what he wanted to get it. The sentiment was all for the Union now. Jon tried to keep them moving. But I begged to let 'em have one good time in their lives.

"If there's going to be a fight to-morrow,

Jonthy," says I, "God knows it will be the last good time for some of them!"

"Nevertheless," says old Jon, in the way I knew, "I can't permit this. They are demoralizing—"

Just about then a hundred girls or so, all dressed up, joined hands across the road right in front of us.

Jon surrendered.

Then a couple hundred more gathered there, right in the road, about the dearest young faces I had ever seen, and began to sing.

Annie Laurie, Her Bright Smile Haunts Me Still, Tramp, Tramp, Tramp! All Quiet Along the Potomac To-night, Home, Sweet Home!

The battered soldiers had begun by singing out of tune with them—very gay. And there was much tossing of flowers to and fro and laughing. But at *Home, Sweet Home* a great silence fell. They took off their hats and let the tears roll down their cheeks. They weren't much like the apple-faced boys, these bearded,

bronzed and faded soldiers. They were from everywhere—Maine to Virginia. But they all cried at *Home, Sweet Home*.

Each one had left a good home—for this!

An old preacher, in a long rusty coat, got up on a store box and addressed the boys, talked to them, nice, just a little, of their homes—and what was in them. Then he prayed and blessed them and begged God to end the war soon and to save them all for their homes.

Suddenly an orderly came riding up to Jon and said something.

"Ladies," Jon shouts out, "thank you for all. But clear the road at once. There is work for us. When we return you may sing us the victor's pæan. Go to the cellars."

I never saw such quick vanishment. Then we sees that we're attacked by rebel cavalry.

"Forward!" yells Jon to the men. "Carry sabers! Trot! Gallop! Charge!"

But before we got well started, the Johnnies burst right on us, in front and both flanks, from behind some barns and houses, cutting

like devils. We had no chance at all. They were dressed in the Union uniforms stolen from the dead at Chancellorsville and we didn't know, in our surprise at seeing men in Union clothes cutting us down, what to do. But Jon did. He never lost his head for a minute.

He ordered the retreat, and we fought our way to the cover of houses and fences and barns. Finally we formed and rested. There were a good many missing. And Jon—there was a dangerous look in his eyes when he saw it. The rebels had posted batteries and were shelling us.

"Boys," said Jon, quiet as a deacon, "I respect an honest rebel. But these are dressed in the uniforms of our dead brothers. What are you going to do about it? I think they outnumber us five or ten to one."

"Advance!" they yells, to a man.

And Jon ordered it.

Oh, that was different! You know how you fight when you're imposed upon. We drove 'em like cattle, riding them down, shooting

them in the back or front—no matter which. The old Jerry-horse, needing no bridle hand, behaved like a trump. He thought he ought to be in front—and he was. But this Jon, beside me, was still another incarnation of my boy—the thing that war makes of gentle men! His cap was off, and his saber was the busiest in the lot. He piloted us into the very hell of it—leading himself to show us how!

We had them demoralized and on the run. The road was nearly impassable with dead men and horses and equipments. But we could see, off to the right, on another road, the colonel commanding, trying to rally some of his men to a last effort. He had only one arm, like me. But he was a Trojan at making men fight. Well, he succeeded. They came at our flank like a whirlwind. But Jon had been making ready. He faced us right, and we counter-charged, Jon in the lead, like Lucifer himself, outdistancing the Jerry-horse.

But the Johnny was game. He gave us a carbine volley on the run and pushed right

into us. God! I'll never forget that coming together! Four thousand men meeting as hard as their horses could run! Those behind piling up on those in front, heaps of shrieking men and plunging horses, and every man at each other's throats, men firing out of this mass and into it! Then a shell fell amongst us and stopped all for a second. When the smoke cleared we could see the rebel colonel pinned under his dead horse, but firing over him at Jon. Corbin and I dashed on to capture him —stop him—firing, too—and then we saw Jon crawl over the dead horse to the rebel colonel and hold up his battered sword to stop *us*. Just then the rebel shot him. I jumped down to help Jon, and found him calling the one-armed colonel Dave!

He worked his arm around Dave and kissed him three times, talking in a soft joyous voice.

"She gave 'em to me to give to you when I found you. And, you see, I have, at last, fulfilled my trust. The fight is all gone out of me now. That was all I stayed in for—to find

you. I have hunted you so long, Dave. For her, Dave. Didn't you know it? Didn't you think I would?"

Dave said nothing—only dazed and dreamy. Jon pushed the blood out of his face and looked at Dave, as if he would never get enough.

"You're not badly hurt, Dave? No; of course not. Nor am I. How could we hurt each other within a mile of home? Now we'll go back to Evelyn and fight no more. Right here the war ends for us. If some one would help me up I could walk. Corbin! Daddy!"

He fainted and Dave gave him some water out of his battered canteen. When he revived, Jon says:

"I'm glad you're not in one of those Chancellorsville uniforms, Dave."

"I ordered that," says Dave, with his head in his hand.

"You!" says Jon. "I'll never believe it. You'd have worn one yourself if you had."

"I had to wear this one," says Dave.

"Why?" says Jon, maybe forgetting.

"It is Evelyn's."

"That's right, Davy, that's right," say Jon. "You're her soldier."

"I am her soldier," says Dave, as if he had no pride in it.

"Dave, I'm tired of war—very, very tired. I want to fish with you. Come!"

But his head fell over on Dave's breast, and Dave caught him in his arm, and so he died.

XXXVI

AS GRASS OF THE FIELD

HOW hard it is to stop a fight—till all are put out in some way! This one went on without leaders, just for spite. Only a few of Jon's and Dave's men, mostly wounded or prisoners of each other, stood around us. We were almost alone. Both Union and rebels took their hats off when Jon drooped on Dave's breast. They seemed to understand.

For a minute Dave was stunned. He saw nothing but Jon's smiling face, the eyes open, looking straight at him, when he turned it up. Even I could hardly believe, from the looks, that my boy was dead. Dave kept stroking Jon's long light hair and saying crazy baby things. But after a while he spoke so's I could hear:

"You're not hurt badly, are you, Jonthy?

Just brace up. Dave would rather die a thousand times than hurt you. You see, I was blind and crazy with pain, and blood in my eyes, or I would have known you as you crawled over the horse. You know how that is, being a soldier, and a better and braver and honester one than I. When you have pain you can hardly stand, and blood from a saber cut in your eyes, you just fire at anything and everything—just for spite and hell in general. And we're all black as niggers with powder. Now wake up, Jonthy, dear. Dave's your prisoner, and he's glad of it. But you've got to take him in. Then he'll nurse you well of the wound he gave you. My God—to think of me shooting you! Jonthy, wake up and tell me you forgive me!"

Just then, as if Jon really heard, the eyes fell shut, and the nerveless head nestled closer to Dave, and bowed a little as if in assent. And, also, just then, Dave pressed his face down to Jon's and knew that he was dead—and, that he had killed him!

I hope I shall never again see such a look on

a man's face as that I saw on the face of my own son then.

I got them both. No one objected. All was sorry for me. And when we took senseless Dave up, we found that he had all the time been pinned by the legs under his dead horse. Neither he nor any one else had thought of the pain and horror of that. Jon I laid on the old Jerry-horse, and Dave on Jon's horse. Both Jon's and Dave's men helped. There was no North nor South there then, but only men. And it showed what we all really were in distress. Just brothers. It was strange how they all seemed to understand.

So we went homeward, slow and solemn, the dead and wounded all about us, I leading the Jerry-horse, Corbin leading Jon's. The battle was over. I don't know who was whipped. But both sides opened ranks as we passed and saluted. The choir of girls was out—yes, as they said they would be—and the rusty old preacher at their head. But it was not a song of victory they sang as we passed, but that

same old thing, *Home, Sweet Home.* And all formed in ranks and followed. The girls were still dressed in white, and had green garlands on their heads and pink and blue sashes around their waists. But I think each dear young eye in those hundreds had a tear for my boys—and maybe, for me. The rusty old preacher recited the services for the dead.

"Lord," he said, "thou sayest, truly, that we know not what a day may bring forth. But an hour ago these young brothers were lusty with life. Now one is dead by the other's hand. And that one maimed. Truly man is like the beast which perisheth. Man is like to vanity. He cometh forth as a flower and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not."

And so we came home.

XXXVII

THE LETTER DAVE WROTE

DAVE, of course, was a prisoner. But there was little enough guarding. He seemed out of his mind. He said almost nothing to me, but would sit with his head in his hands and look at me till I got creepy and had to go away. And then, one morning, he was missing.

I am ashamed to say it, but, in some ways, I was glad. I could hardly bear it. Soon I couldn't have. It was not my Dave. It was a tortured, warped and silent spirit. One day I said that we were only one man between us, just in fun, because we had only two arms together. He didn't seem to understand.

"Where did you lose your arm, Dave?"

He looked down at the place a long time,

trying to recollect, then he shakes his head, like he couldn't, and says:

"I—don't—know."

Wouldn't you know where you lost your arm?

"Davy," I says again, "does it hurt at the wound in your head?"

"Am I wounded in the head?" asks he.

"Yes," says I, "the day that—Jon died."

Dave nods and puts his hand to his head then, as if he really remembered.

"The—day—I *killed*—Jonathan!" he breathes, looking straight away at nothing at all. "My brother—Jonathan!"

Suddenly he starts up and hunts for his accoutrements.

"I must go. She's coming. Did you hear her singing?"

"Who?" asks I. "I hear no singing. Who?"

He didn't tell me who, but stops listening and sits down again.

"I always think I hear her coming. Even in

battle I turn my head often, expecting to see her, thinking I hear her. I am always ready."

"Ready for what?" asks I.

"To fire," says Dave.

"On her—whoever it is?"

"Yes. I must kill her when she comes. She killed Jon. She made a traitor of me. She must do no more harm. I mustn't kill her here. No, there must not be two deaths on you, daddy. Maybe I couldn't—here! But I *must* —I will—*kill her.* She's a murderer."

That night he disappeared.

The letter Jon got that day, on the Square, from Dave, was in Jonathan's pocket when he died—all black and ragged, but in Dave's big handwriting—easy to read—very easy to read. Evelyn's got it in a little ivory box up-stairs—all alone. But we've read it so often, with so many tears, that I know it by heart—every word. It is the last testament of Jon and Dave together. For, as you will remember, after that they met but once—just long enough for one to shoot the other.

"Dear Old Jonthy:

"I heard you out under the trees. Don't you go. I am going as Mallory. If I'm to be 'saved' I'd rather save myself—and thank myself for it. I won't do any more harm down there than I have to do to fill Evelyn's contract. Now, then, Jonthy, dear, she *must* love you. And you *must* marry her. Why, if I should hear, some day, that you were married, I'd go crazy with joy—so maybe you better not if you don't want a crazy brother. And if, further, I should hear—and I *shall* hear everything that goes on!—that there were a lot of lovely little *dark-eyed* Vonners running about the old place—the more the better—I should go more crazy—so perhaps you'd better not—unless you want a double-crazy brother. Anyhow, I shall never come back. Honest, Jonthy, I couldn't after this. Could I? Would you? And the minute I am out of sight I'll give up the dear old name. Maybe you'll hear of the prodigious deeds of Lucas Mallory some day. I wish you wouldn't go. But, if you must, go for your country, and for no woman—even Evelyn. Fight under the glorious old stars and stripes! Bring back honor enough to cover up the dishonor I shall bring—if they find out who I am. And then, for God's sake, come back safe. Evelyn needs you. Make her keep out of the spy business. Hoop la! It is

done. It can not be undone. Jonthy, don't let it be in vain! Marry her. Beat her into it if there's no other way. I would.

"Jonthy—about Evelyn a little more—I didn't know that there had been anything between you till I heard you to-night. Dear brother, even though it was all for me, it wasn't right. You let me go about loading the agony on you day by day. I didn't see a thing then. I see it all—all now! And I have that to think of to the end of my days. We have never lied to each other—and you'll believe me now. If I had known— But what's the use? It's too late for that. I made her love me—just carried her off of her feet. Otherwise, she would have kept on loving you. No, no, no! That would be the first lie between us, and it shall not be—even for Evelyn. And it will not make things easier. But, Jon, I didn't *know*. That's the only thing I can say—both at beginning and end.

"This is the longest and most mixed letter I ever wrote, Jonthy, dear. And it makes my head and heart tired. But, just at the last, a word about the fishing. Somehow, when I think of that I am not tired any more. And it seems like you'd forgive me and smile again —if we could only go fishing! Think of the fishing, Jonthy, when you read this. And a little chap riding on your back, his arms close about your neck, you holding his little fat legs

under your arms, harder and harder as you go from a trot into a gallop! I wouldn't have harmed you then for the universe. And, believe me, brother, I would no more do it now. An hour ago that time seemed a long way back. Now, it's right here, and I am smiling as I write of it. Smile, Jon! Think of the fishing! You catching them all. Me bothering. Are you doing it? Smiling? I know you are. And that's the best time to say farewell—forever and forever farewell! I love you like a brother. There is no greater love. I kiss your faithful feet!

"DAVE.

"P. S. Two o'clock, A. M.

"Jonthy, dear, it's awful hard to go. I am shivering. It is ninety degrees below zero with me. But, at last, I'm in Evelyn's uniform. It fits me—a little tight. I stole it when I came up-stairs to bed. There's a stain of blood on the right side. Her blood. Part of her. I shall wear that until—what? I wonder what? Please marry her, Jonthy. Don't you wish we were little again? And slept together in the trundle bed? And there were no beautiful Southern Evelyns? And we could go fishing? And didn't have to go to war—shivering?

"LITTLE FAT DAVE.

"Ha, ha! Laugh, Jonthy, dear.

"P. S. S. Three o'clock:
"I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan:
Very pleasant hast thou been unto me:
Thy love to me was wonderful—
Passing the love of women.

. . . . . .

"How are the mighty fallen!
And the weapons of war perished!
"DAVID."

And his Bible was open and turned down on the letter at the story of David and Jonathan and how Jonathan saved David and was killed himself.

XXXVIII

PEACE

ONE day, after the war was over, I was sitting alone here, in the afternoon sun, when a woman, dressed like a nun, came, slow and solemn, up the yard. She hung her head until she got close to me, then she put it down on my old knees and cried. It was Evelyn.

For a long time we said nothing. We couldn't. Then I asked her:

"Where have you been, Evelyn?"

"In hospitals—Union hospitals—rebel hospitals. Helping to heal the wounds I made—and such as I. Searching for Dave."

"Have you come to stay with me, once more?" I asks.

"As long as we live," says she, "if you will have me."

"Have you!" says I, putting my one arm around her.

"I wasn't sure," she says. "If you had done to me and mine what I have done to you and yours, I wonder whether I would forgive you?'"

"Yes, you would," says I.

"And, maybe," she says, after a while, "he will come back to you. Then I shall be here. I know now that he will never come to me."

"No," I says, "he will never come to you," and I hands her the letter to read.

She's coming up the yard now. See! She has red and white roses in her hands—from Jon's hotbed behind the barn where her wedding flowers were to grow! She wears the red roses—just as she did that last night, for Dave. The white ones are for Jon. She's just put some on his grave. She does it early every morning. I call her my angel of the blue and the gray. She calls me her two lovers of the gray and the blue. She says I must love her as much as they both did. But I say that she's

my two boys, and that she must love me as much as they both did.

Just in fun—all just in fun!

It's a long time we have waited together. And all the sorrows of the war seem healed except ours. He ought to come. He ought to hurry. He is a brave and generous boy. So he must give Evelyn a chance to say she's sorry. That's all she lives for. Then—I don't know what!

But he mustn't kill her, like he said, when he comes, only put his arms around her and kiss her—kiss her till she's tired of kissing—if there is such a thing. And sing a funny little song—and laugh, and dance a hoe-down—like when they came back from the riding. And he must take her fishing and let her ketch some of the fish. He must forget and forgive. We mustn't be the only ones the war leaves desolate.

Yes, see, she's coming up the yard. She's been to Jonthy's grave. Coming with the sun in her face, and happy!

XXXIX

AFTER THE STORY

THIS is the story which beautiful old Stephen Vonner told me in his apple-orchard one night in June. We sat under a low-boughed tree whose blossoms filtered lovingly down upon us all the long night. For the story began while the setting sun still glowed in our faces and went on through the nesting of the birds, the sleep-song of the cicadas, the amazing night-stillness; while the constellations reeled above and the serried Milky Way marched past; until the full moon rose, saying: "Lo, I have looked upon wo for a million years! And it passes—always it passes. Have peace!" Until the risen sun peered, again, upon us through the dewy boughs, repeating its promise of a new day.

And, all these things of nature were appa-

nages of the human story—the sympathetic accompaniment, if you like.

Then, when the sun was fully risen, Homeric Stephen Vonner lay his one arm upon the rude table where we sat, and his mighty tired head upon it, and slept—as, I think, he had not slept for long. For, his heart was shriven.

And I, who had come long miles, from a city, to hear his simple tale, rose softly and went my way, leaving him in the peace of God and his own dear land.

For, the pity of it all was strong upon me.

I walked beside a barely practicable road, upon wonderful moss, under thick-girthed, aromatic oaks whose branches met my bared and moody head.

It was haying time and the air was full of the fragrance of the new hay and all was green —save where the fields of yellowing grain stood out, laughing and happy, proclaiming their sovereignty of the land.

The hum of a mower reached me, and the happy laughter of the makers of hay—a song!

And, as I passed into the day, there came to sight a pasture with kindly-eyed, ruminating kine deep in a stream, under that shadow of mighty trees.

Indeed, one of the intense beauties of this land was these islands of great trees standing out from the grain and clover and timothy, webbed in gray "snake" fencing.

Then I saw, coming toward me, a woman.

She might have been younger than fifty. Tall she was, with wonderful dark hair and an imperial figure. She carried in her arms a great burden of roses—some red, some white. Her head was bare.

Here everything was attuned to the great harmony, Peace. And, into this peace, nothing fitted more perfectly than this woman.

She had seen me before I saw her; yet there was no change in gait or expression. I might be a passer-by upon whom she would look this once and never more. Peace indeed!

Said I to the woman:

"Are you the *Evelyn* of the story?"

"Yes," she smiled.

For the youthful name must have sounded odd on my alien lips.

"You will print it?" she asked.

"Every word," said I.

"Then—maybe?"

But was there an interrogation in the soft dark eyes? Was it possible that before me she laid down her cross and would take it up again only when she reached Vonner? Was it certainty to him and uncertainty to me? For the sin of loving too well was this her endless penance? I would not be a party to the interrogation. I took the soft old hand; I gazed into the velvety eyes; I said:

"There must be no 'maybe'."

"No," she nodded humbly, with bowed head, "that was wrong."

Yet, within me that conscience which doth make cowards of all—but the women who wait, was crying:

"It is fifty years! Dave, if alive, is an old, old man! Evelyn is an old woman! Age can

not love! If Dave were alive and had a mind to return he must have done so long ago! If one loves does one stay away?"

"Why," she was smiling while I was compounding treason, "we have done everything else to get word to him, but, strangely enough, have never thought of printing his story and sending it into every corner of the earth. I think God himself sent you here to-day to put even greater peace, and more hope into our hearts."

"I trust so," said I cravenly.

"Perhaps God thinks we have expiated our sins," the woman went on joyously now, "and is ready with our reward. For we have waited fifty years! Fifty long, long years!"

Her voice broke and there was silence between us for a space.

Vonner's voice had been soft with the German of his ancestors. But Evelyn's caressed with the elisions of the South—which alien tongues could never quell. I fell to the won-

derful voice. But, presently, my conscience would not and rose in revolt. Almost without my willing, it uttered a grim warning:

"Do not forget the years," said I. "Dave would be seventy if he should come back."

But, instantly, when I had choked down conscience, I was glad that my saying had not hurt her. It meant nothing to love like hers.

"And, do men cease to love and forgive at seventy?" asked the gentle voice. "Women don't. I do not, and I am nearly seventy."

She said it with a wonderful smile, while her nostrils quivered and her face was lighted with the eternal passion.

What man can know a woman's waiting! What man can know a woman's loving!

And, so, that conscience, which, veined with reason, had uttered its stern warning, now weakly hastened to reverse itself and lend hope and comfort to the amazing love and waiting.

For the moment I was ashamed of my conscience. I felt like bidding it stand fast. I.

"Be not afraid, he will come for this forgiveness you are sending to him through all the world!"

But, inside of me, to use one of Vonner's thoughts, conscience was again saying:

"If not here in another—and, God knows!—perhaps a better world—for such as you and Jon and Dave!"

"Yes!" she said now.

And I, too, now said yes!

I over-argued.

"Love is immortal," I urged. "There are no years for you and him."

A sudden flush, as of youth, overspread the cheek and throat of Evelyn. She nodded quickly, as a young girl might. Then, indeed, I believed my own saying! She did. The interrogation was gone from her eyes. I was glad.

"I *know* he will yet come," she said now, very quietly, while the years rolled from her. "Please come back. You must say good-by among the blossoms. It is better luck."

I did.

Evelyn lifted the beautiful head of the old man to her arms, and putting back the abundant hair, kissed the closed eyes. They did not open.

"He is very sleepy," she smiled. "I reckon we will let him rest here. Sleep is good—no matter where we get it or how. Let him sleep."

She replaced the old head on its arm upon the table, and set me forth, once more, upon my way—a happier way, now.

. . . . . .

And now, Dave, if you still live, and this reaches you, come home!

If you are dead and those live who know it, send no message!

It is better so. Far, far better so.

THE END

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